

ΑΘΚΑΣ



GUIDE TO BYZANTINE HISTORICAL WRITING

This handy reference guide makes it easier to access and understand histories written in Greek between 600 and 1480 CE. Covering classicizing histories that continued ancient Greek traditions of historiography, sweeping, fast-paced “chronicle”-type histories, and dozens of idiosyncratic historical texts, it distills the results of complex, multilingual, specialist scholarship into clear explanations of the basic information needed to approach each medieval Greek history. It provides a sound basis for further research on each text by describing what we know about the time of composition, content covered by the history, authorship, extant manuscripts, previous editions and translations, and basic bibliography. Even-handed explanations of scholarly debates give readers the information they need to assess controversies independently. A comprehensive introduction orients students and nonspecialists to the traditions and methods of Byzantine historical writing. It will prove an invaluable timesaver for Byzantinists and an essential gateway for classicists, western medievalists, and students.

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GUIDE TO BYZANTINE HISTORICAL WRITING

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For Harvey and Martha Rhody

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Introduction



This guide aims to make the riches of medieval histories written in Greek easily accessible to anyone who may be interested. It is a gesture of welcome to classicists, to western medievalists, as well as to students beginning their intellectual exploration of the world. While it contains no information that a diligent Byzantinist could not track down with time, gathering the information into one place may help them as well. The purpose is to provide a reliable starting point for research by explaining the basics of what we know about a text and how we know it, while avoiding the repetition of scholarly speculation. Calculated guesswork is part of doing medieval history, and I am all in favor of a good supposition from time to time. Yet often one scholar's reasonable guess is soon cited as fact, so that later readers do not know the relative stability of the ground they are building on. The goal here is to set a firm foundation and let you do the speculating.

Where this guide may innovate is in putting the emphasis on exploration of the surviving texts, rather than on medieval authors. Since the early modern period, scholars have been keenly interested in recovering the biographies of the individuals who wrote the histories, and reconstructing texts that no longer survive on the basis of hints in the manuscripts that do survive. The search for the lives and careers of creative agents was a natural expression of the Renaissance interest in individuals. This basic project animated the field well into the twentieth century, and much of the scholarship cited in the following pages is committed to recovering the lives of medieval authors. Developments in late-twentieth-century thought, commonly discussed under the rubric of the "linguistic turn," have shifted the focus of much scholarship from reconstructing individuals to analyzing texts.¹ Quite apart from the changing fashions

¹ Gabrielle Spiegel, "The Future of the Past: History, Memory and the Ethical Imperatives of Writing History," *Journal of the Philosophy of History* 8 (2014): 149–79. Elizabeth A. Clark, *History, Theory, Text: Historians and the Linguistic Turn* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

of theory, the only things available for us to study are texts in surviving manuscripts (throughout this book “manuscript” refers to a physical artifact written by hand). It would seem simply safer to lay the groundwork for further scholarship by focusing on these things in their own right, rather than looking ever past them toward how we imagine their creators. We are indeed able to say a good deal about the lives of many of the medieval men (and the woman) who wrote these histories, but since this guide aims to provide a fundamental starting point, we have tried to err consistently on the side of skeptical caution.

For some of the histories in this guide, we have plenty of information about the author, and can describe his career and work with great confidence. In other cases, our texts are entirely anonymous. Yet most of the time what we know about an author comes from the text he ostensibly wrote. Things get interesting in these cases because it is difficult to know how much we should trust what the texts seem to say about their authors. Consider the authorial information carried in the title *Brief Chronicle Collected, Combined, and Interpreted from various Chroniclers by George the Monk and Sinner*. The text that follows is highly moralizing, and packed full of stories about virtue rewarded and sin punished – not at all the sort of thing that would be written by someone who squandered life on booze and floozies. We therefore should distrust the claim that George was particularly sinful, although the monk part is easy to believe. The reasoning behind this fib is clear: if George had said he was a virtuous man, he would be guilty of the sin of pride, so he accused himself of sinfulness to make himself look humble, and therefore virtuous. Yet the fact that half of what this virtuous man tells us about himself is a lie, strictly speaking, should give us pause about trusting other statements in texts too readily. If this text were actually written by a Gregory who decided to take the truly humble step of attributing it to George, we would never know it. This history is discussed under the entry “George the Monk,” because that is the name associated with it in scholarship, but bear in mind that all we have are manuscripts with the name George in the title. Discussions about George himself are necessarily speculative. This case is clear enough that no one has been taken in and thought that George was *really* a sinner. But are we more justified in taking at face value the statements of those trained in artful rhetoric? The highly-educated and powerful imperial jurist John Zonaras says that he wrote his history in lonely retirement. Such a statement makes his history seem more reliable because, far away from the halls of power, he was less likely to favor old friends. Is it true? Scholars trying to account for all the phases of his life and career work hard

to put him in retirement when writing history, but what if he were retired the way George was sinful?

The skeptical approach of this guide is in contrast to that taken in the most thorough English-language treatment of Byzantine historiography, Warren Treadgold's *Early Byzantine Historians*, and *Middle Byzantine Historians* (a volume on *Late Byzantine Historians* is forthcoming).² Treadgold is a maximalist in terms of reconstructing medieval authors. He strives to erase anonymity by coming up with something to say about the author of every text and associating the names of medieval writers with anonymous surviving histories. Many of his suppositions might be correct, but they are expressed with a confidence that may encourage undue trust. He also is committed to reconstructing lost texts that seem to lie behind the ones we do have, including lengthy discussions of texts that exist only in his mind. It seems clear that some of our surviving texts weave together portions of earlier works we no longer possess, and again he might be right. Treadgold's books appear to contain a great deal more data about the past than this one. Students are likely to prefer his books because they provide a comfortable confidence in our depth of knowledge about the Middle Ages, whereas this guide can be frustrating in its lack of certainty. The bracing ignorance displayed in the following pages, however, can reassure you that you have not been misled. We try to let you know what is known and let you do the guessing. Think of this book as a dry martini to Treadgold's cream sherry.

This is not a guide to all the sources from which we derive information about the Byzantine Empire, but only those that ostensibly participate in traditions of Greek history writing. Many kinds of source material – such as seals, taxation records, letters, pollen counts, etc. – provide data from which we can explore the history of the Byzantine Empire and the Eastern Mediterranean more broadly.³ Many kinds of document contain narratives

² Warren T. Treadgold, *The Early Byzantine Historians* (New York: Palgrave, 2007); idem., *The Middle Byzantine Historians* (New York: Palgrave, 2013).

³ An extremely fine brief introduction to the field is the "General Introduction" to Jonathan Shepard, ed., *The Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire, c. 500–1492* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 2–98. There are other good places to start: Jonathan Harris, *Palgrave Advances in Byzantine History* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Elizabeth Jeffreys, John Haldon, and Robin Cormack, *Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). Karagiannopoulos's detailed list of sources is available in Greek or German: Ioánnēs E. Karagiannopoulos, *Pégai Tēs Vyzantinēs Historias*, 5th ed. (Thessaloniki: Ekdoseis P. Pournara, 1987); Ioánnēs E. Karagiannopoulos, *Quellenkunde zur Geschichte von Byzanz (324–1453)*, trans. Günter Weiss, *Schriften zur Geistesgeschichte des östlichen Europa* 14 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1982). The new digital version of a major classical encyclopedia *Brill's New Pauly* has expanded coverage of medieval Greek authors. If you know what you are looking for, it is a great place to start. Manfred

about the past that are quite close to historical writing. An orator praising the emperor's victories will explain the course of recent events.⁴ A funeral oration may include narratives about events in the deceased's life that can be quite extensive.⁵ When writing their wills or foundation charters people sometimes included a sketch of their life's story.⁶ Although such texts do contain recognizably historical narrative, this guide only includes texts that call themselves "histories," or "chronicles," or that clearly look like such.⁷

We have included histories written between 600 and 1490 CE. These temporal boundaries leave out all of what has traditionally been called "Early Byzantine" history. "Early Byzantine" history is now commonly seen as a part of the history of "Late Antiquity." The earlier period has been studied in far greater depth than the later centuries. Several good introductions, and a host of detailed individual studies, exist for the historians of Late Antiquity.⁸ Studies of classical and late antique historiography typically end with Theophylact Simokattes. We have started with him. The end point for our project extends beyond the end of the empire in 1453, because the fall of Constantinople was one of many changes that gradually altered

Landfester, Hubert Cancik, Helmuth Schneider et al., eds., *Brill's New Pauly: Encyclopaedia of the Ancient World: Classical Tradition* (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

⁴ Magdalino makes extensive use of court oratory to construct the biography of Manuel Komnenos: Paul Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143–1180* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

⁵ An example of an extensive historical narrative within a funeral oration is in Manuel II Palaiologos's oration for his brother Theodore: Julian Chrysostomides, ed., *Manuel II Palaeologus: Funeral Oration on His Brother Theodore* (Thessaloniki: Association for Byzantine Research, 1985).

⁶ For example, Gregory Pakourianos and Michael Attaleiates both told the highlights of their life adventures in the beginning of the foundation documents for their monasteries. Robert Jordan, trans., "Typikon of Gregory Pakourianos for the Monastery of the Mother of God *Petritzonitissa* in Bačkovo," in *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, ed. John Thomas and Angela Constantinides Hero, vol. 2 (Dumbarton Oaks, 2000), 507–63. Alice-Mary Talbot, "Attaleiates: Rule of Michael Attaleiates for His Almshouse in Rhaidestos and for the Monastery of Christ Panoiktirmon in Constantinople," in *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents*, ed. John Thomas and Angela Constantinides Hero, vol. 1 (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2000), 326–76.

⁷ We have made exceptions to include some texts, such as Kaminiates's letter on the capture of Thessaloniki, because they are so often discussed in the modern scholarly literature as histories that it would be a disservice to leave them out. We have not included the brief notices of dates and events that appear in numerous manuscripts. Although these are sometimes called "short chronicles" in scholarship, these notes on dates are not examples of historical writing of the sorts that are considered on this book. On these notices see Peter Schreiner, *Die Byzantinischen Kleinchroniken* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1975); Apostolos D. Karpozilos, *Vyzantinoi historikoi kai chronographoi*, vol. 2 (Athens: Kanakē, 2002), 529–611.

⁸ David Rohrbacher, *The Historians of Late Antiquity* (London: Routledge, 2002); Arietta Papaconstantinou, Muriel Debié, and Hugh Kennedy, eds., *Writing "True Stories": Historians and Hagiographers in the Late Antique and Medieval Near East* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010); Gabriele Marasco, ed., *Greek and Roman Historiography in Late Antiquity: Fourth to Sixth Century A.D.* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

the intellectual and cultural landscape of the Eastern Mediterranean. We included the generation of people who lived through the final defeat of the empire and wrote about the dissolution of the Roman Empire and the growth of Ottoman power. The latest historian we included, Laonikos Chalkokondyles, wrote a history that imitates Herodotus in many respects. Chalkokondyles's choice to imitate the first Greek historian makes his history a particularly fitting place to end our survey.

The discussions of individual texts are not uniform in style because of the great variety among the texts discussed. Some texts are a few pages long, and others fill multiple volumes. Some have been studied continuously for hundreds of years, and others hardly at all. Some have authors who were well-known public figures, and some are anonymous. We have tried to provide at least one English-language item for further reading. We have spent more time summarizing the contents of texts that have not been translated into a modern language.

Byzantine History is the history of the Roman Empire in the Middle Ages. Western European historical traditions have seen the advent of Christianity as a major turning point in human history. Regardless of whether the Christianization of the Roman Empire is seen positively, as the triumph of Christianity, or negatively, as the onset of the Dark Ages, considering Christianization as the crucial pivot point in human history leads to the supposition that the eastern Roman Empire stopped being the *real* Roman Empire once it had become Christian. Christianization was a deeply significant change within the culture of the Eastern Mediterranean. It cannot be trivialized or dismissed. It did not, however, sever the political entity of the Roman Empire into two segments in the minds of its inhabitants. To gain any traction in understanding Byzantine history, modern scholars need to take seriously the self-understanding of the inhabitants of the medieval Roman Empire as Romans.⁹ Too often even Byzantinists have considered them to be Greeks who thought they were Romans, or Byzantines who thought they were Romans, thereby attributing a false consciousness to the subjects of their study. In no other fields do historians routinely treat the subjects of their inquiry as having an inaccurate understanding of who they were. The Renaissance and Enlightenment narratives that posited a stark break between Antiquity and the Dark Ages have long been rejected by modern historians. Yet the aftertaste of these narratives continues to give many scholars a rough working

⁹ Anthony Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

understanding of the Byzantine Empire as separate and distinct from the *real* Roman Empire. Resisting the aftereffects of these paradigms allows scholars to take seriously the understanding and self-presentation of the citizens of the Medieval Roman Empire.¹⁰

In the sixth and seventh centuries, continuity in political identity with the classical Roman Empire coexisted with radical disruption of economic activity brought on by plague, war, and the collapse of long-distance trade networks. While the quality of life for many people may have improved when the owners of vast estates no longer violently exploited their labor, the amount of money spent on products of high culture diminished, and therefore the seventh century seems far poorer, from the standpoint of literary production.¹¹ The historical texts composed in the seventh through ninth centuries can seem, frankly, underfunded. The authors were just as astute and perceptive, but the products do not reflect particularly high standards of education.

Few histories survive from the seventh to ninth centuries. We have two historical texts from the seventh century, none from the eighth, and five from the ninth. It is likely that fewer people were writing histories in the seventh and eighth centuries, but also later generations did not prize, and recopy, historical texts from that era. In particular, histories that favored emperors who supported the theology of iconoclasm (726–787 and 814–842) were not valued, and perhaps even deliberately destroyed, by people who later favored icon veneration.¹² The study of the eighth century largely relies on texts written later.¹³

Roughly speaking, the economy of the Eastern Mediterranean improved in intensity and expanded in monetization throughout the medieval period.¹⁴ The rhetorical quality of classicizing histories improves

¹⁰ In the field of Late Antiquity, formed in conscious reaction to discourses of Dark Age rupture, it is normal for scholars to call the citizens of the fourth–sixth century eastern Roman Empire Romans, following the usage of the late ancient texts.

¹¹ Chris Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean 400–800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

¹² This controversy over whether the veneration of images of saints and Jesus was idolatry looms large in the ninth-century writings of those who favored icon veneration. They showed the earlier emperors who had opposed icon veneration in the worst possible light, and likely inflated the significance of the whole controversy. On Iconoclasm, see Leslie Brubaker and John F. Haldon, *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era, C. 680–850: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Leslie Brubaker, *Inventing Byzantine Iconoclasm* (London: Bristol Classical Press, 2012).

¹³ Some of the later texts may have quoted or drawn on histories written in the eighth century. Theophanes, in particular, is often treated as a potential mine for earlier histories.

¹⁴ The fortunes of the Empire did not track consistently with economic expansion because the state was not always able to collect revenue effectively (particularly in the eleventh century). The political and fiscal troubles of the Empire, however, did not affect the ability of its elites to write compelling

approximately in step with economic expansion in the empire. Increasing prosperity in the late tenth and eleventh centuries was concurrent with the flourishing of rhetorical training and expansion of classical education.¹⁵ This trend is reflected in the production of increasingly sophisticated histories. Although the empire in the 1070s–1080s experienced significant military losses, and a fiscal crisis, intellectual culture blossomed.¹⁶ From the eleventh century on, it was possible for elite writers to have a knowledge of classical literature, philosophy, and history as profound as that we are taught to expect from Renaissance humanists.

The twelfth century marks a high point for Byzantine literary culture, with a confluence of political stability and patronage, extraordinary educational opportunities, and playful innovations in genres and styles.¹⁷ The sack of Constantinople by the Fourth Crusade, in 1204, had a devastating impact on the sheer number of books available, the survival of ancient texts, and the networks of literary patronage. Individual authors could still acquire fine rhetorical and classical educations, but the increasing

history. Angeliki Laiou, “The Byzantine Economy: An Overview,” in *The Economic History of Byzantium from the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*, vol. 3 (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002), 1145–64.

¹⁵ Stratis Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos Rhetoric and Authorship in Byzantium* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Athanasios Markopoulos, “Roman Antiquarianism: Aspects of the Roman Past in the Middle Byzantine Period (9th–11th Centuries),” in *Proceedings of the 21st International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys, vol. 1 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 277–97.

¹⁶ Alexios Komnenos’s (1081–1118) coin reform of 1092 marked the establishment of a new fiscal footing, as well as a new monetary system, replacing the debased coinage of the eleventh century. Cécile Morrisson, “Byzantine Money: Its Production and Circulation,” in *The Economic History of Byzantium from the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Angeliki Laiou, vol. 3 (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002), 909–66; Gilbert Dagron, “The Urban Economy, Seventh–Twelfth Centuries,” in *The Economic History of Byzantium From the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Angeliki Laiou, vol. 2 (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002), 393–462; Michael Angold, “Belle Époque or Crisis? (1025–1118),” in *The Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire, c. 500–1492*, ed. Jonathan Shepard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 583–626; Paul Magdalino, “The Empire of the Komnenoi (1118–1204),” in *The Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire c. 500–1492*, ed. Jonathan Shepard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 627–63.

¹⁷ Kaldellis, *Hellenism*, 225–317. Some examples of innovative texts: Elizabeth Jeffreys, trans., *Four Byzantine Novels*, Translated Texts for Byzantinists 1 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012); Barry Baldwin, trans., *Timarion*, Byzantine Texts in Translation (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1984); Theodore Prodromus, *Der Byzantinische Katz-Mäuse-Krieg*, ed. Herbert Hunger (Graz: Böhlau in Kommission, 1968). Some recent studies: Dimitris Krallis, “Harmless Satire, Stinging Critique: Notes and Suggestions for Reading the Timarion,” in *Power and Subversion in Byzantium*, ed. Dimiter Angelov (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 221–45; Margaret Mullett, “Novelisation in Byzantium: Narrative after the Revival of Fiction,” in *Byzantine Narrative: Papers in Honour of Roger Scott*, ed. John Burke (Melbourne: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 2006), 1–28; Ingela Nilsson and Eva Nystrom, “To Compose, Read, and Use a Byzantine Text: Aspects of the Chronicle of Constantine Manasses,” *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 33, no. 1 (2009): 42–60; Panagiotis Roilos, *Aphotero glossia: A Poetics of the Twelfth-Century Medieval Greek Novel* (Washington, DC: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2005).

precariousness of patronage seems to have led to a diminishment of literary output in the thirteenth century. The desire to continue the traditions of empire, first in exile in Nicaea, and after 1261 in a recovered Constantinople, stoked interest in sustaining the writing of history. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the importance of the imperial government diminished as the Eastern Mediterranean became an increasingly polyglot mixture of competing Italian, Turkish, Serbian, and Greek political entities.¹⁸ In this Renaissance milieu, the skills of the classically trained rhetoricians were highly prized. Some of the authors at the end of our spectrum worked for the Genoese lords of Lesbos, and the Ottoman sultans, as well as for the last Roman emperors.

The cultural continuities evident in the Byzantine historiographical tradition can mask the changes in society, economy, and international politics that took place over the nine centuries covered in this book. A lot changed in the Mediterranean between the seventh and fifteenth centuries. That ideas about how history ought to be recorded remained so constant is a testament to the adaptive flexibility of Byzantine classicism, and the compelling nature of the Greek historiographic tradition.

Medieval Historical Texts: Histories, Chronicles, and Terminology

Saying that this guide only deals with texts that look like histories or chronicles begs the question of what a Byzantine history would look like. The conception shared by ancient and medieval writers in Greek, that “history” was a distinct kind of writing, gives us some confidence that we can pick the “histories” out of the rest of medieval Greek texts with some success. For a long time Byzantinists divided historical texts into two separate kinds: histories, which were good; and chronicles, which were not. In part, this categorization was prompted by the nature of the texts, but it also drew on and cultivated a set of unhelpful prejudices about medieval writing that have obscured the study of Byzantine history writing. The biases that underpinned the distinction between chronicle and history have been exposed, and some scholars advocate vigorously that the distinction should be abandoned entirely.¹⁹ Byzantine vocabulary for historical

¹⁸ Judith Herrin and Guillaume Saint-Guillain, eds., *Identities and Allegiances in the Eastern Mediterranean after 1204* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011). Angeliki Laiou, “The Palaiologoi and the World around Them,” in *Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire*, ed. Jonathan Shepard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 803–33.

¹⁹ Ruth Macrides, “How the Byzantines Wrote History,” in *Proceedings of the 23rd International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Smilja Marjanović-Dušanić (Belgrade: Serbian National Committee of AIEB, 2016), 257–63.

texts does not reflect the distinction between histories and chronicles. Yet the distinction was not based on prejudice alone, and most historical texts do have characteristics that make it look like one or the other of two styles of historical writing.²⁰ We will try to describe the differences without perpetuating the unhelpful assumptions.

In the traditional categorization, chronicles were viewed disparagingly as the unoriginal compositions of poorly-educated and superstitious monks. Karl Krumbacher, a highly influential late-nineteenth century Byzantinist, associated the chronicle tradition with monks, and attributed to it a deeply Christian mindset that de-emphasized human endeavors in favor of cosmic divine action.²¹ Chronicles were characterized as using a low-style Greek, as concerned with salvation history, portents and natural disasters, and chronological listing of major events over a broad swath of time. By contrast, histories were attempts to follow in the tradition of classical historians such as Thucydides and Xenophon. They used more classicizing Greek, focused on the choices and actions of individuals, and covered a shorter time span.

The histories were thought to be continuations of a classical tradition, while the chronicles were inventions of the Christian Middle Ages. For the scholars of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the medieval was seen as naturally worse than the ancient, and so the chronicles were seen as unworthy of study as works of historical craft. The chronicles could be used for gathering data on events, but not much was expected by way of authorial subtlety, as the authors were assumed to be uniformly and piously disinterested in human affairs.

In 1965 Hans-Georg Beck dealt a fatal blow to the theory of the “monkish chronicle” by showing that most of the authors of the chronicles were not monks, and that many Byzantine monks were not monkish.²² He demonstrated that several chroniclers who were monks at the end of their lives, were not lifelong devotees of the cloistered life. It was not unusual for Byzantine people to take monastic vows as they were dying. The adoption of the “angelic habit” was considered a proper preparation for the next world, especially for emperors or other politicians who inevitably needed to atone for their sins. Generals, courtiers, and prominent church officials

²⁰ Paul Magdalino, “Byzantine Historical Writing, 900–1400,” in *The Oxford History of Historical Writing*, ed. Sarah Foot, Chase F. Robinson, and Daniel R. Woolf (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 2:222–3.

²¹ Karl Krumbacher, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur von Justinian bis zum Ende des oströmischen Reiches (527–1453)*, 2nd ed., Handbuch der klassischen Altertums-Wissenschaft, IX, Pt. 1 (Munich, 1897), 319–23.

²² Hans-Georg Beck, “Die byzantinische ‘Mönchschronik,’” in *Ideen und Realitäten in Byzanz* (London: Variorum, 1972), 188–97.

would become monks as a means of safely ending a career that had become dangerous. Late-life monasticism could as easily be a sign that the individual had been particularly engaged in the world, rather than particularly pious. If these men wrote histories in their monastic retirement, we are not justified in thinking their writing would reflect a pious lack of interest in world affairs.²³ As well as debunking the idea that Byzantine chronicles were written by monks who reflected a uniform cloistered piety, Beck effectively exposed the prejudice that underlay the link between supposed monastic authorship and simple-mindedness.

More recently, scholars have emphasized that writing year-by-year accounts of events – chronicle writing – was not a medieval invention. Rather it was a development of an ancient form of historical writing just as much as the genre called “history.”²⁴ A more thorough understanding of the variety of historical writing in the ancient world makes it impossible to see chronicle writing as a distinctively Christian response to history and time.²⁵ Traditions of year-by-year chronicle writing developed into the most common form of historical writing in the Latin west.

So what did the Byzantine forms of historical writing look like? Some look a great deal like classical Greek histories that covered a relatively short stretch of time, such as those by Thucydides or Xenophon. The conventions of this genre were fairly well defined, and the authors expressed awareness of writing in this specific tradition. These are the texts that scholars have called classicizing histories. The texts that scholars have called chronicles are chiefly characterized by taking on a vast stretch of time, usually going from the Creation of the world up to the author’s present. There is more variety within this group and less consensus about the boundaries of the genre. We will describe the characteristics of the classicizing histories first, and then discuss the main features of the various other kinds of historical writing.

Classicizing histories conform to the stylistic rules of the classical Greek tradition of history writing. Herodotus, Xenophon, Thucydides, and their successors established history writing as its own kind of writing, different from oratory, drama, or other kinds of composition. There is a lot of

²³ Since Beck wrote his essay, studies of Byzantine monasticism have emphasized how deeply integrated monks were into the fabric of lay society. Even those men who joined monasteries out of pure devotion often did not experience severe separation from society. Rosemary Morris, *Monks and Laymen in Byzantium, 843–1118* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

²⁴ Richard W. Burgess and Michael Kulikowski, *Mosaics of Time: The Latin Chronicle Traditions from the First Century BC to the Sixth Century AD*, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 33 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013).

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 35.

variety in form, scope, and aesthetic sensibility among subsequent histories in Greek throughout the medieval era, but there is also much agreement on the style of language and exposition appropriate for a history. There were stable norms about what topics ought to be included in a history (mostly politics and war), how narrative should be written, what should be mentioned in the introduction, when the author should comment on the action, and so on. One of the chief characteristics was the use of classical Attic Greek. Authors tried to write in the language of ancient Athens to the best of their ability, even though this differed considerably from their everyday spoken language. Classicizing history is a good name for this genre because it is fundamentally about trying to describe recent events in the same way that ancient events had been. For all the variety of the medieval histories, they were part of a tradition that was remarkably stable in terms of language, style, and content.

Classicizing histories generally opened with an introduction, (*proemion*), in which the ostensible author proclaims his truthfulness.²⁶ Many introductions invoke Herodotus's claim that the purpose of writing history is to prevent the memory of the past from being obliterated by time.²⁷ It was commonplace for historians to say that they were going to write only what was true without favoritism. Often historians criticized their predecessors for being biased flatterers who distorted the truth because of hope for gain or personal grudges.²⁸ They claimed the deeds they were about to record were particularly worthy of commemoration. Often the authors explained that their skills were inadequate for the task of writing history, but they were compelled by some outside force, either the entreaties of other people or the danger that the deeds would be forgotten. The rhetorical skills of the author worked to persuade the audience that the history was true.²⁹ Authors of classicizing history often claimed that they wrote based on personal autopsy, about matters that they had seen and information that they

²⁶ Where texts do not have a *proemion*, we have reason to think the opening was lost.

²⁷ Leonora Neville, "Why Did Byzantines Write History?," in *Proceedings of the 23rd International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Smilja Marjanović-Dušanić (Belgrade: The Serbian National Committee of AIEB, 2016), 265–76.

²⁸ Iordanis Grigoriadis, "A Study of the Prooimion of Zonaras' Chronicle in Relation to Other 12th-Century Prooimia," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 91 (1998): 327–44. Robert Browning, *Notes on Byzantine Prooimia* (Vienna: In Kommission bei H. Böhlau Nachf., 1966).

²⁹ Anthony J. Woodman, *Rhetoric in Classical Historiography: Four Studies* (Portland: Areopagitica Press, 1988); M. J. Wheeldon, "True Stories: the Reception of Historiography in Antiquity," in *History as Text: The Writing of Ancient History*, ed. Avril Cameron (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 33–63; Mullett, "Novelisation in Byzantium: Narrative after the Revival of Fiction," 7–8.

gathered through their own witness.³⁰ In all these respects, Byzantine histories followed classical traditions of historiography.³¹

Classicizing histories take on a discrete segment of time. Histories were detailed explorations of the causes and deeds involved in a particular reign or other more chronologically narrow series of events. Some scholars see classicizing Byzantine histories as almost by definition contemporary history, in which the author describes events of his own lifetime.³² Histories would often pick up the narrative thread where a previous history had stopped, so that together they created a continuous narrative.³³ The introductions to histories can include statements in which the author justifies his decision to write history by appealing to the need to continue the story from the point at which another text had ended. From the ninth century on, classicizing histories tended to be organized around the reigns of emperors with the accension and death of a particular emperor framing the discussion of the events. Most histories covered several reigns, but Anna Komnene's *Alexiad* is an extreme case of an entire history devoted to the reign of one emperor.

Histories were concerned with commemoration of great events. Histories were not particularly concerned with setting out the big chronological picture or a single moral viewpoint. Histories described and evaluated the deeds of individual actors, often emperors. The deeds recorded in histories were those of men engaged in politics and war. Histories are political and military narratives. Ecclesiastical politics sometimes joined the story as an aspect of imperial politics. Yet many topics that are of interest to us – our whole fields of economic, social, or cultural history – were not covered in histories. Medieval people were likely interested in money, familial and social relationships, and changes in cultural fashion, but they did not think of history books as the place to discuss any of that.

The authors of classicizing histories could maintain an open authorial presence throughout their texts. In some classicizing histories the author's personality is readily apparent and the author plays a significant role as guide and narrator to events.³⁴ The increase in rhetorical training and

³⁰ Martin Hinterberger, *Autobiographische Traditionen in Byzanz*, Wiener byzantinistische Studien 22 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1999), 295–343.

³¹ One of the most helpful books for understanding Byzantine historiography therefore is John Marincola, *Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

³² Hinterberger, *Autobiographische Traditionen in Byzanz*, 296.

³³ Anthony Kaldellis, "The Corpus of Byzantine Historiography: An Interpretive Essay," in *The Byzantine World*, ed. Paul Stephenson (London: Routledge, 2010), 211–22.

³⁴ Ruth Macrides, "The Historian in the History," in *Philellēn: Studies in Honour of Robert Browning*, ed. Costas N. Constantinides, Nikolaos Panagiotakes, and Elizabeth Jeffreys (Venice: Istituto ellenico di studi bizantini e postbizantini di Venezia, 1996), 205–24.

re-engagement with late-classical rhetorical culture that took place in the late 10th and 11th centuries appears to have coincided with growing numbers of classicizing histories. Intensification of an author-centered book culture, as opposed to traditions of anonymous writing, was an aspect of this larger intellectual trend.³⁵

The texts Byzantinists call chronicles contrast with the classicizing histories in a number of significant ways. One is the use of a simpler style of Greek. They are not vernacular texts, written in anything like the spoken language of the day, but the grammar is more like the *koine* Greek of the New Testament and the vocabulary is less complex. The simple Greek of chronicles was long taken as a marker of lack of education. Yet the use of a less-classicizing Greek could be a deliberate choice. Sophisticated and rhetorically well-trained writers could choose to write in a lower register for the sake of clarity, as an expression of humility (and hence virtue), or to fit with the style appropriate to the chronicle genre.³⁶ Just as the authors of classicizing histories worked hard to write in an ancient language with a diverse vocabulary, so the authors of these historical texts tried to write accessibly.

The other major distinction from the classicizing histories is that “chronicles” take on a much larger span of time. Chronicles usually start with the Creation of the world and run up to the time of the author. Only two Byzantine historical texts, the *Paschal Chronicle* and Theophanes, qualify under the strict definition of a chronicle as an historical text that provides brief lists of events that happened in each year.³⁷ Yet when Byzantinists talk about chronicles, they are referring to historical texts that cover a large period of time with great brevity.³⁸

Some texts, such as Joel, Peter of Alexandria, or Patriarch Nikephoros’s *Chronographikon Syntomon*, string together a list of rulers in succession from Adam to the most recent emperor or some other point, with little commentary.³⁹ These extremely brief texts, which are more like lists than

³⁵ Stratis Papaioannou, “Voice, Signature, Mask: The Byzantine Author,” in *The Author in Middle Byzantine Literature: Modes, Functions, and Identities*, ed. Aglae Pizzone (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 21–40.

³⁶ On authorial humility see: Derek Krueger, *Writing and Holiness: The Practice of Authorship in the Early Christian East* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).

³⁷ Burgess and Kulikowski, *Mosaics of Time*, 30–31.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 30–31, 61. Burgess and Kulikowski term this genre of writing *breviaria*, meaning a brief treatment of many thousands of years of history. Their distinction between chronicles and *breviaria* is convincing and useful. I have not adopted it because so much scholarship on Byzantium uses the vocabulary of chronicles that it would be confusing to introduce a new terminology. It also does not seem to make sense to use a Latin term for talking about Greek historical writing.

³⁹ The *Chronicon Bruxellense* does the same thing, but starts with Christ.

fleshed out prose, may have helped make sense of the whole world by setting major events in relation to each other. Slightly more expansive texts, such as Symeon the Logothete, Theodore Skoutariotes, or Ephraim, will have the lists of rulers be the primary structure, but note other events that happened in the reigns of those rulers. The rulers could be biblical patriarchs and kings, or Babylonian, Persian, or Roman emperors. These often increase in detail as they move closer to the time of composition, but their root purpose seems to have more to do with connecting the here and now with Adam, Christ, and the emperors. These texts can include the deeds of apostles and bishops. Often, unusual natural phenomena or portents are included.

Other texts use the reigns of rulers as headings under which various events are listed but do more storytelling about things that happened in each age. The chronicle of George the Monk begins with Creation and wanders quickly through history to the ninth century, pausing to discuss a wide variety of topics. He includes long digressions on theological matters, which often take the form of lengthy strings of quotations, and numerous entertaining anecdotes of little historical importance that are best understood as short stories. Kedrenos similarly told moralizing stories, and explained theological truth, while running through history from Creation to the present.

Besides the broad sweep of time, these texts seem to speak to humanity's role in cosmic history and offer a program of Christian world history. Charting the chronology of the whole of human history made the unfolding of the divine drama of Creation, Incarnation, and empire clear. Major events in the reigns of recent emperors get added into the record, but chronicles rarely reflect the experiences that were of personal importance to local communities at the time of composition.

Whereas the authors are often present in classicizing histories, the authors of chronicles stay in the background. These texts were often anonymous, and if they were associated with a named author, the author's voice was not generally heard in the text. An interesting case in point is provided by Michael Psellos. In his classicizing history of the eleventh century, Psellos appears as a character in the drama and has a strong authorial presence as narrator and guide to history throughout the work. When he took his turn to write something more like a chronicle however, Psellos kept such a low profile that scholars have doubted that he wrote it.⁴⁰ It now

⁴⁰ Stratis Papaioannou and John Duffy, "Michael Psellos and the Authorship of the *Historia Syntomos*: Final Considerations," in *Vyzantio, kratos kai koinōnia: Mnēmē Nikou Oikonomidē*

seems secure that he wrote both texts; he just adjusted his presentation to fit the different purposes. The complex manuscript histories of some chronicles – in which it can be difficult to figure out if a text is a modified “copy” of another chronicle or an “independent” text – owes much to the relative anonymity of the chronicle tradition.

A number of Byzantine historical texts do not look like either of the two styles discussed. John Zonaras wrote a history that started with Creation, like a chronicle, but was written in high style Greek and primarily concerned with secular history. John Skylitzes said he was continuing the work of Theophanes the Confessor, but whereas Theophanes’s work was a true year-by-year chronicle, Skylitzes’s work, in its scope and methods, was more like a classicizing history. Constantine Manasses wrote a fairly brief text that began with Creation, but it was in verse and focused far more on sex, jealousy, and fate than theology. Michael Glykas wrote a text that spent more time on the first seven days of the world than anything else, but it looks just like a chronicle from Jesus on, listing emperors briefly in succession.

These anomalies point out that the distinction between classicizing histories and chronicles is a construct that we have made to help us talk about Byzantine historical writing. The differences between chronicles and the classicizing histories are significant enough that some scholars continue to use the distinction. Yet the norms of the genres were always more guidelines than rules, and no one policed the boundaries. To the contrary, our texts display many variations and frequently play with the rules of the game.⁴¹

For all kinds of Byzantine historical writing, it was acceptable for an author to reuse material that had been written by another. In a society that grades kindergarteners for creativity, (and flunks people who plagiarize), Byzantine attitudes toward the reuse of older writing can seem perplexing. But if material was well-written and appeared to be true, it could be incorporated into a latter work without risking opprobrium. The authors of Byzantine chronicles have been denigrated as hacks who simply

Byzantium, State and Society: In Memory of Nikos Oikonomides, ed. A. Avramea, Angeliki Laiou, and Evangelos Chrysos (Athens: Hellenic National Research Foundation, 2003), 219–29. Even in the *Historia Syntomos*, Psellos’s personal agenda can be discerned: Raimondo Tocci, “Questions of Authorship and Genre in Chronicles of the Middle Byzantine Period: The Case of Michael Psellos’ *Historia Syntomos*,” in *The Author in Middle Byzantine Literature: Modes, Functions, and Identities*, ed. Aglae M. V. Pizzone, *Byzantinisches Archiv* 28 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 61–76.

⁴¹ Dmitry E. Afinogenov, “Some Observations on Genres of Byzantine Historiography,” *Byzantion* 62 (1992): 13–33. Jakov Ljubarskij, “George the Monk as a Short-Story Writer,” *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 44 (1994): 255–64; Nilsson and Nystrom, “To Compose.”

cut-and-pasted bits of others' work. Yet when studied in detail, the chronicles seem to have been written, or compiled, with an aim of emphasizing particular points. Even the authors most easily seen as compilers have been shown to engage in intentional authorial acts with regard to the editing and presentation of their source material.⁴² The chronicles vary too much to see them as simply copied one from another.

Authors, Audiences, and Purposes

Writing was an elite activity of the highly-educated classes. If we can generalize, historians were people with public careers. As far as we can tell, none of the authors we can identify, of either histories or chronicles, had history writing as their primary occupation. It is not unusual for authors to have an imperial title associated with their name, indicating that they had some role in the imperial administration. Imperial titles did not always correspond to the actual tasks administrators were asked to undertake, so a title does not often tell us what the individual spent his time doing. In many cases, we do not really know what people with a particular title were supposed to be doing.⁴³ We have not always provided an English equivalent for titles because they can give a false sense of certainty about the author's regular job. There does seem to be a strong connection between history writing and legal work in the ninth to twelfth centuries. In this era, many historians were trained as lawyers and had careers as judges before turning to history.⁴⁴ The titles are generally congruous with high-level positions.

Some authors were monks, but for the reasons explained above, this may not have had much impact on their worldview. Some authors had titles that were associated with the patriarchal clergy. Up through the twelfth century however, the patriarchate was a branch of the imperial government and I would not assume that clerical title holders would have had a different ideology from their lay counterparts. The absence of prohibitions

⁴² Roger Scott, "Narrating Justinian: From Malalas to Manasses," in *Byzantine Narrative: Papers in Honour of Roger Scott*, ed. John Burke, et al. (Melbourne: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 2006), 29–46; Tocci, "Questions of Authorship and Genre in Chronicles of the Middle Byzantine Period: The Case of Michael Psellos' *Historia Syntomos*."

⁴³ Imperial titles were important in political culture of the empire in the eighth to eleventh centuries, but did not necessarily have much connection to the actual doing of administrative work. Leonora Neville, *Authority in Byzantine Provincial Society, 950–1100* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 5–65.

⁴⁴ Angeliki Laiou, "Law, Justice, and the Byzantine Historians: Ninth to Twelfth Centuries," in *Law and Society in Byzantium: Ninth–Twelfth Centuries*, ed. Angeliki Laiou and Dieter Simon (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1994), 151–86.

on clerical marriage below the rank of bishop led to thorough integration of clerics into lay society. The lay imperial secretary Michael Glykas wrote one of our most pious texts, while the monk John Zonaras wrote one of the most secular.

We know less than we would like about the audiences for history in Byzantium.⁴⁵ The audience for the texts we call chronicles seems to have been significantly larger than that for classicizing histories. Histories survive in fewer manuscripts, and seem to have had a smaller circulation. Chronicles tend to have multiple copies, with plenty of variations among manuscripts.⁴⁶

The normal way of apprehending a text in the ancient and medieval worlds was to hear it read aloud. For many kinds of Byzantine literature, the oral sound produced when they were performed by a rhetorician was a vital aspect of their artistry that is difficult for modern readers to appreciate.⁴⁷ As we read silently we lose all sense of the euphony, alliteration, and rhythm of medieval Greek texts. Especially for scholars trained to read Greek with an early modern Western European pronunciation (“Erasmian” pronunciation is commonly taught in the US), it can be hard to appreciate anything of the sound of medieval Greek.⁴⁸ We also are not attuned to dramatic presentation and the emotional impact of the storytelling. Our silent and solitary reading habits do not form a good guide to the medieval experience of listening to histories.

The differences in scope, aims, and language between chronicles and histories seem to indicate different intended audiences, or at least different reasons for engaging in a historical text. For classicizing histories, the true audience was posterity. The introductions to many histories insist that their purpose is to preserve the memory of great deeds from oblivion. Histories fought against the destructive effects of time by recording deeds worthy of eternal memory. They served a commemorative purpose. A second commonly held purpose of histories was to educate audiences about how they ought to behave. The actions of past figures were taken as models for people to either emulate or shun. As Attaleiates explains, the victories and

⁴⁵ The fundamental study is Brian Croke, “Uncovering Byzantium’s Historiographical Audience,” in *History as Literature in Byzantium*, ed. Ruth Macrides (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2010), 25–54.

⁴⁶ Magdalino, “Byzantine Historical Writing, 900–1400,” 223.

⁴⁷ Kaldellis, *Hellenism*, 237. Andrew F. Stone, “Aurality in the Panegyrics of Eustathios of Thessaloniki,” in *Theatron: Rhetorische Kultur in Spätantike und Mittelalter / Rhetorical Culture in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, ed. Michael Grünbart (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2007), 419–28.

⁴⁸ Early modern pronunciation systems are easier for learners because they use a different sound for each written vowel, whereas in medieval and modern Greek many vowels sound the same.

defeats recorded in histories, “convey clear instruction and set patterns for the future. They simply lead us to imitate what was discerned well and to avoid ill-advised and shameful deeds ...”⁴⁹ History was a teacher of character.⁵⁰

That history taught one how to act in war and politics suggests an audience of men who could have political or military careers. The preface to the history of Basil I (867–886), ostensibly written by his grandson Constantine VII (945–959), clearly states that it is the future emperors who are called to learn from their progenitor’s example.⁵¹ The examples of deeds of emperors could also be useful and appealing models for individuals acting on a far smaller local stage. Many people could engage with histories as means of learning powerful lessons for action and morality without thinking that they would ever become emperors or generals themselves.

History was also a genre of entertainment. Key elements of the Greek historiographical tradition go back to the epics of Homer. The ideas that history should record great deeds and great words, and celebrate them, are part of the legacy of Homeric epic for historiography. Homer also lent history writing the third person narrative, and concern with the sequence of events, their causes, and effects.⁵² These remained essential elements of history through the medieval period. Byzantines classified history with entertaining display oratory rather than utilitarian civic oratory.⁵³ Commonalities in the sequential narrative in the third person and the purpose of preserving the memory of great deeds ensured that history and epic were considered kindred types of writing.

That histories were considered a genre of entertainment akin to epic did not make them unimportant. Histories could teach strong moral lessons. Whereas chronicles teach the proper relationship between the audience and the cosmos, histories teach the audience how to respond to the challenges of their immediate situation. Ancient histories were also studied to learn

⁴⁹ Anthony Kaldellis and Dimitris Krallis, trans., *Michael Attaleiates: The History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 9.

⁵⁰ Neville, “Why Did Byzantines Write History?”

⁵¹ Ihor Ševčenko, *Chronographiae Quae Theophanis Continuati Nomine Fertur Liber Quo Vita Basilii Imperatoris Amplectitur* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), 10–11.

⁵² John Marincola, “Odysseus and the Historians,” *Histos* 1 (1997); Hermann Strasburger, *Homer und die Geschichtsschreibung* (Heidelberg: Winter, 1972); Marincola, *Authority and Tradition*, 6; Frank W. Walbank, “History and Tragedy,” *Historia* 9 (1960): 216–34. Charles Fornara, *The Nature of History in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 31, 61–90.

⁵³ This categorization was developed by Hermogenes. Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos*, 103. On the connection between history and entertainment: Stratis Papaioannou, “The Aesthetics of History: From Theophanes to Eustathios,” in *History as Literature in Byzantium*, ed. Ruth Macrides (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 3–21; Magdalino, “Byzantine Historical Writing, 900–1400,” 2012, 221.

how to write and develop a good prose style.⁵⁴ The events covered in the history of Thucydides are virtually invisible in Byzantine chronicles. Fifth-century Athens was utterly unimportant from the Byzantine perspective. Yet Thucydides was studied carefully as a teacher of expression and fine writing.

The entertaining and commemorative function of history suggests that its audience would overlap somewhat with the audience for epic. History could be enjoyed by the educated elite who liked recalling stories of great deeds told in exemplary rhetorical fashion. We can imagine a performance context for classicizing histories that were conceived as examples of fine rhetoric. There is more evidence for live performance of literary texts from the twelfth century on.⁵⁵ Byzantines used the classical Greek word for theater for any place where texts were performed.⁵⁶ We do not have archaeological evidence for actual theaters that brought together large segments of the population. Rather it seems aristocratic households would have audience halls or other gathering spaces where texts could be performed by rhetoricians. It seems medieval Romans were dealing with a system of aristocratic patronage of orally performed literature that was remarkably similar to that for classical Roman oratory.⁵⁷ Scholars of the medieval west have also learned to appreciate the impact that performance of texts had on their medieval reception.⁵⁸

While we envision many rhetorical texts such as letters and orations being performed before audiences, scholars have not yet thought much about whether histories were performed in this way.⁵⁹ Most of our histories simply seem too long to read aloud in a sitting. This is true, but I think that they would be highly entertaining and emotionally engaging if performed episodically for a few hours an evening over a stretch of time. In my culture one of the most popular forms of entertainment

⁵⁴ Anthony Kaldellis, "The Byzantine Role in the Making of the Corpus of Classical Greek Historiography: A Preliminary Investigation," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 132 (2012): 71–85.

⁵⁵ Magdalino, *Manuel*, 339–53; Margaret Mullett, "Aristocracy and Patronage in the Literary Circles of Comnenian Constantinople," in *The Byzantine Aristocracy: IX–XIII Centuries*, ed. Michael Angold (Oxford: British Archeological Reports, 1984), 173–201; Roderick Beaton, *The Medieval Greek Romance* (London: Routledge, 1996), 16–17, 225.

⁵⁶ Przemysław Marciniak, "Byzantine Theatron – a Place of Performance?," in *Theatron: Rhetorische Kultur in Spätantike und Mittelalter / Rhetorical Culture in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, ed. Michael Grünbart (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2007), 277–85.

⁵⁷ John P. Sullivan, *Literature and Politics in the Age of Nero* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985).

⁵⁸ Evelyn Birge Vitz, Nancy Freeman Regalado, and Marilyn Lawrence, eds., *Performing Medieval Narrative* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2005).

⁵⁹ I suggest as much for Nikephoros Bryennios: Leonora Neville, *Heroes and Romans in Twelfth-Century Byzantium: The "Material for History" of Nikephoros Bryennios* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 29–32.

are television series that unspool complex narratives at the rate of ten episodes a year for a half decade or so. No one seems to have particular trouble following the plot. As we study Byzantine histories more closely, and translate more of them, we are coming to greater appreciation of their dramatic power. The history of John Skylitzes was long seen as a pastiche of earlier texts that ran dryly through events without concern for style or storytelling. Yet Catherine Holmes has convincingly demonstrated that Skylitzes in fact reworked his sources to highlight appealing episodes of “cinematic” action. Moments of heroic confrontation are foregrounded, yet presented in a stylized manner that minimizes the distractions of peculiar old titles and odd place names. While frustrating for modern historians who want to recover the particularities, these changes streamlined events to heighten their dramatic impact.⁶⁰ Other histories are vivid, exciting, and spark strong emotional reactions even when read silently.⁶¹ I have no trouble imagining at least some people gathering in aristocratic households to hear them performed. The numbers of people interested in doing this sort of thing were probably not too great, and this reflects our small number of manuscripts for most classicizing histories. This was a genre for a limited elite audience, perhaps in some cases not extending much beyond the imperial palace.

The texts we call chronicles survive in many more copies than classicizing histories, indicating that they enjoyed a wider audience. The language is simpler, so more people would be able to understand them, but that is not a reason to think they were shunned by the educated elite. Chronicles have a strong utilitarian function in helping people understand biblical history, and how biblical history and contemporary history fit together. Chronicles told you how we got from Adam to now, and where the Pharaoh, David, Nebuchanezzar, Cyrus, and Caesar stood in relation to each other. While, to my knowledge, we have no medieval texts saying as much, I think it likely that the main audience for chronicles was people trying to understand biblical stories and the relationships between the kings and emperors mentioned in the Bible and their own era. Chronicles could also teach strong moral lessons about which historical characters should be revered or

⁶⁰ Catherine Holmes, “The Rhetorical Structures of Skylitzes’ Synopsis Historion,” in *Rhetoric in Byzantium*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 187–200; Catherine Holmes, *Basil II and the Governance of Empire (976–1025)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 16–119.

⁶¹ Such personal responses are always subjective and I probably have a particular taste for Byzantine historiography, but I cried when reading Attaleiates and Chalkokondyles in translation. I think any of the classicizing histories would pack a punch in the course of a long, spread-out, episodic performance.

reviled. This certainly could indicate a monastic context for reading chronicles, but also lay households and communities.

It is difficult to imagine some chronicles being read as after-dinner entertainment, even to an ascetic audience. The *Paschal Chronicle* was designed to help properly calculate the date of Easter and otherwise establish the liturgical year. It lists every year, dated by a variety of chronological systems, even if no events are then listed as having happened in that year. This utilitarian purpose suggests that that it might have been consulted silently rather than read to a crowd. We only have one fragmentary copy. On the other hand, the chronicle of George the Monk is full of entertaining and morally edifying stories that are similar to hagiographies and stories that were read aloud in monasteries. The manuscript record indicates that George's chronicle was extremely popular. I have no doubt it was a form of entertainment in monasteries, and probably in many secular households as well. The chronicle of Constantine Manasses, written in fairly simple but rhetorically elegant verse, combines an easy guide to how all the parts of history fit together with delightful stories of adventure and romance. Needless to say, it is among the most widely copied Byzantine histories.

Classicism, Emphasis, and Meaning

Citizens of the medieval Roman Empire conceived of their culture as having deeply ancient roots, which had not been torn off when that empire became Christian. Whether oriented toward Christian sacred history or Aegean classicizing history, Byzantines engaged and contended with ancient historical traditions. Byzantine culture has been denigrated as merely imitative of the classical past. Yet classicism can lead to profound and subtle creativity. Is Virgil an uncreative hack because he imitated Homer? Did Willy Nelson use a nineteenth-century hymn tune in his "Red-headed Stranger" song cycle because he couldn't think of another melody? On the contrary, his use of the tune completes the meaning of his songs as the audience recalls the theological message of the hymn's lyrics. Those with the cultural knowledge of American Protestantism interpret the song cycle differently because for them the tune recalls themes of redemption that are nowhere stated in Nelson's lyrics. Without the cultural background, you miss the point. In this, Nelson's cycle is similar to much of Byzantine literature where the quotation or allusion to a classical source adds to the meaning of the text by drawing on the cultural knowledge of the audience. The more intimately familiar you are with classical

Greek, biblical, and patristic texts, the more echoes of them you will see in Byzantine historiography.

This sort of allusive figured speech – speech that prods an audience to draw a particular conclusion without spelling it out for them – was considered more powerful than plain speech by Byzantine authors. In repressive or absolutist regimes figured speech or covert expression can be safer than blunt or open speech. Yet ancient authors understood that figured speech is more effective, even among friends, than blunt speech. As a matter of both tact and safety, figured speech has been a part of Greek writing since antiquity. Some Byzantine writers continued traditions of writing that understood oblique suggestion as a strong form of statement. The English word “emphasis” is the etymological heir of the Greek *emphasis*, and both mean stress and prominence, but the way emphasis was achieved in ancient writing is directly contrary to modern methods.

The basic idea behind *emphasis* in Greek rhetoric was that an audience would trust conclusions they drew themselves more than an author’s bald accusation.⁶² One famous example of this is when Procopios, in narrating the history of the Nika riots that nearly overthrew Justinian (527–565), has Justinian’s wife Theodora make a speech arguing that he should fight the rioters rather than fleeing to safety. Theodora says that Justinian could flee, but “for my part, I like that old saying, that kingship is a good burial shroud.”⁶³ This shames the men into fighting and Justinian has 30,000 rioters in the hippodrome killed. Well-read members of Procopios’s audience would have recognized Theodora’s phrase as coming from a story about Dionysios the tyrant of Syracuse (405–367 BCE), who was notorious for his cruelty. When Dionysios was about to flee from a violent rebellion against him, one of his courtiers told him that “tyranny makes a good burial shroud.” The statement prodded Dionysios to stay, fight, and retain his crown by dint of killing the rioters. Those who knew the origin of Theodora’s famous phrase would recognize that her words were not brave and heroic, but bloodthirsty and tyrannical. When the surface meaning of the text is combined with knowledge about classical history, the audience is prodded to condemn Theodora and Justinian for tyranny and compare him to one of history’s most ruthless rulers. While the surface of the text can be read as depicting Justinian positively, the allusion

⁶² Fredrick Ahl, “The Art of Safe Criticism in Greece and Rome,” *American Journal of Philology* 105 (1984): 174–208.

⁶³ Anthony Kaldellis and Henry Bronson Dewing, trans., *Wars of Justinian*, Hackett Classics (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc, 2014), 64.

prompts a scathing assessment for thoughtful readers.⁶⁴ This is what Byzantines called *emphasis*: giving enough information for the audience to complete a text's meaning. Modern western writers emphasize something by stating it clearly, loudly, and in boldface type. Well-trained medieval Greek writers practiced emphasis by engaging in figured speech that often drew on allusions to classical texts and ideas. By supplying the right bits of information and the right oblique suggestions, authors were able to elicit the judgments they desired from an audience, knowing that the audiences were more likely to trust the judgments they reached themselves.

The implication of Greek emphatic writing is that if you only pay attention to the meaning on the surface of the text you can miss a lot of what is going on. Often medieval texts rely on allusions or quotations of earlier texts to add layers of meaning to their writing. The context and meaning of the quoted source can add an extra dimension of meaning. For instance, Anna Komnene lifts a phrase from Sophocles's *Ajax* that fits nicely into her opening sentence of her history, where a surface reading would have her merely borrowing elegant words. Yet those who know the play will recognize that the phrase opens a memorable sentence in which the hero Ajax goes on to say that nothing strange should be unexpected since even he has become female.⁶⁵ As she steps into the male role of historian, Anna's allusion signals that her crossing of gender boundaries has a precedent. Byzantine rhetoricians studied classical and biblical texts extensively, and often used vocabulary found in those texts. Not every word or phrase shared between two texts was an intentional allusion. Yet it is worth exploring what could be meant by an allusion, and tracking down where unexpected phrases come from.

Authors could also add meaning to their texts by playing with the multiple meanings of words. Many Greek words have multiple meanings and context determines which is intended. Rhetoricians played with audience's sense of context and constructed polyvalent texts in which multiple meanings are all intended.⁶⁶ Nearly every other line of Choniates's history could mean at least two things.⁶⁷ Medieval Greek pronunciation, in which

⁶⁴ James Allan Stewart Evans, "The 'Nika' Rebellion and the Empress Theodora," *Byzantion* 54 (1984): 381–83; Leslie Brubaker, "Sex, Lies and Textuality: The Secret History of Prokopios and the Rhetoric of Gender in Sixth-Century Byzantium," in *Gender in the Early Medieval World: East and West, 300–900*, ed. Leslie Brubaker and Julia M. H. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 83–101.

⁶⁵ Leonora Neville, *Anna Komnene: The Life and Work of a Medieval Historian* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 32–35.

⁶⁶ Roilos, *Aphoroglossia*.

⁶⁷ Stephanos Efthymiades, "Niketas Choniates: The Writer," in *Niketas Choniates: A Historian and a Writer*, ed. Stephanos Efthymiades and Alicia Simpson (Geneva: La Pomme d'Or, 2009), 35–58.

several different written vowels all have the same sound, allowed for extensive punning. When we consider how texts would have sounded when read aloud, it becomes clear that authors used puns to put even more layers of meaning into their texts.⁶⁸ Needless to say, such texts provide challenges to accurate translation.

Byzantine classicizing histories shared ideas about truth, accuracy, and impartiality with ancient histories that differ from modern historical practices. Texts following the norms of ancient Greek history writing sometimes would include speeches purporting to be what was actually said at a given moment. Classicists have been debating how to interpret the speeches in ancient histories for a long time. The trick is that the ancient historians were vigorous in asserting their devotion to the truth, yet the speeches must have been invented, at least in part. Many classicists now would agree that ancient historians would have considered it truthful to invent a speech that accurately reflected the reality of the situation.⁶⁹ The particular words may have been composed by the historian, but if they helped create a narrative that was plausible, and that fairly reflected the ethics, character, and decision-making habits of the speaker, the speech was truthful. Procopios probably considered the speech he wrote for Theodora to be entirely truthful. Since, in his view, she was ruthless and tyrannical, a speech that suggested those things to the audience was a true reflection of her character. His account of the Nika riots expressed *more* truth about the events than if he had not made up the speech.

By ancient standards, Procopios also displayed the characteristics of an impartial or unbiased historian in this passage because he had not succumbed to the temptation of flattering the ruler. By speaking truth to power, Procopios displayed his freedom and lack of partiality. In our society, students are taught that historians should be “objective,” meaning “not taking sides.” They are taught to be alert for any sign that an historian is “biased” in favor of one party or the other, and so they would see Procopios as a bad historian because he was “biased against” Theodora. For ancient and medieval historians in the Greek tradition, impartiality meant not taking sides unfairly, or for personal reasons. Ancient historians would see Procopios as a bad historian if he flattered Theodora because

⁶⁸ Dirk Krausmüller, “Strategies of Equivocation and the Construction of Multiple Meanings in Middle Byzantine Texts,” *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 56 (2006): 1–11.

⁶⁹ As a starting point see: John Marincola, “Speeches in Classical Historiography,” in *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography*, ed. John Marincola (Malden: Blackwell, 2007), 118–32; Matthew Fox and Niall Livingstone, “Rhetoric and Historiography,” in *A Companion to Greek Rhetoric*, ed. Ian Worthington (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), 542–61.

he wanted to get some benefit from the ruler. Revealing the truth about Theodora's bloodthirsty ambition would probably not count as "biased" writing by ancient or medieval standards. The study of how Byzantine historians thought about truth, accuracy, and impartiality in history is still in its infancy.⁷⁰ Given that they learned how to write histories by studying classical histories, I think we can lean on the insights gained from the extensive scholarship on classical histories.⁷¹

There are no set rules for determining when an author is using figured speech and Byzantinists argue frequently about how much to read into a given text. It is a matter of personal judgment guided by understanding of literary and historical contexts and traditions. Readings that help a text make more "sense" generally meet with approval and those that leave an author disconnected from his society and culture are more distrusted. Of course, our understanding of Byzantine culture and society is changing constantly, so what one scholar finds far-fetched can seem spot on to another. Keep in mind that Byzantine studies is a slow-moving field, compared with western medieval studies or classical studies, so there can be gaps of decades between detailed studies of some texts. The last book or article written on a text may not reflect any current scholarly consensus. While it can be frustrating, the allusive nature of some Byzantine writing makes it a grand intellectual game. It is a game the medieval authors are inviting you to play and that many Byzantinists will testify is deeply rewarding.

Practicalities of Byzantine Histories

Systems of Dating

In the medieval Roman Empire, years were dated by relation to the imperial taxation cycle and by counting from Creation. The "Indiction Cycle" began in the fourth century as an ambitious plan for systematic taxation. The idea was that every fifteen years the imperial government would take a census and survey the empire to assess how much tax people could pay, which would set the taxation rates for that fifteen-year period. It is difficult

⁷⁰ Ralph-Johannes Lilie, "Reality and Invention: Reflections on Byzantine Historiography," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 68 (2014): 157–210.

⁷¹ A few starting points in a vast field: John Marincola, ed., *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography* (Malden: Blackwell, 2007); John Marincola, ed., *Greek and Roman Historiography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Marincola, *Authority and Tradition*; Christopher Gill and Timothy P. Wiseman, *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993); Woodman, *Rhetoric in Classical Historiography: Four Studies*.

for us to appreciate just how staggeringly difficult it would be for a pre-modern state to collect this sort of data for an area as vast and diverse as the Late Antique empire. That anyone ever thought they could even try spoke to the tremendous power of the fourth-century government. It is unclear if taxation ever worked this way, and it certainly did not in the medieval empire, although the idea that taxation was assessed based on a census – and that the emperor knew where everyone was – was maintained through the eleventh century.⁷² Dating by the indiction cycle related events to the life of the empire and affirmed the sovereignty of the imperial state.

In indiction dating, years were numbered continuously from one to fifteen, each time making the sixteenth year “year one of the indiction.” Years were usually dated by giving both the indiction year and the reign of the emperor. Since most emperors did not reign more than fifteen years, this was often enough to create a precise definition of the year. Indiction dating is emblematic of the unusual nature of the Roman polity: the political structure of the empire was so stable that it lasted for 15 centuries, but the office of emperor could change hands relatively frequently. If a document names an indiction without an emperor, or if the emperor had a particularly long reign, we cannot know precisely which indiction cycle was meant. In modern studies if you see that an event is listed as happening in either of two years that are fifteen years apart, it probably derives from a source that lists an indiction, but no other means of distinguishing which indiction was meant.

Dating from the Incarnation never became common in the Byzantine Empire. Rather, people counted years from the Creation of the world. The abbreviation A.M., for the Latin *anno mundi*, is often used in translations to indicate the Byzantine reckoning of year of the world. Several different calculations of the age of the world were in competition until the early ninth century when the chronicle of Theophanes pegged Creation to what we call September 1, 5509 BCE. Theophanes’s dating became standard in subsequent Greek texts.⁷³

⁷² Arnold H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire, 284–602: A Social, Economic, and Administrative Survey* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1964), 452–62. On taxation and imperial ideology in the medieval period see: Leonora Neville, “Information, Ceremony and Power in Byzantine Fiscal Registers: Varieties of Function in the Cadaster of Thebes,” *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 25 (2001): 20–43.

⁷³ Pavel Kuzenkov, “‘How Old Is the World?’ The Byzantine Era and Its Rivals,” in *Proceedings of the 21st International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 23–24. Anthony Bryer, “Chronology and Dating,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys, John F. Haldon, and Robin Cormack (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 31–37.

The New Year started on September 1. When in modern scholarship an event is given as having occurred in, for example 815/16, it means that it happened between September 1 of 815 and August 31 of 816. Generally scholars only bother to list years this way when they have reason to think the event happened in the winter of that year, but it is unclear whether it happened in 815 or 816. Day and night each had twelve hours which varied in length with the amount of sunlight. So a summer daytime hour was longer than a winter daytime hour.

If you need to calculate the CE date where a text dates from Creation, and you are dealing with a text written after the middle of the ninth century, subtracting 5508 will get you close. Keep in mind that the Byzantine year started in September. If the event of interest happened between September and January, you will need to count back one more year. If you know a CE year and want to calculate which year it was in the Byzantine indiction cycle, add 3 to the year and divide the total by 15. If the remainder is 0, the indiction is 15, otherwise the remainder is the indiction. Grumel analyzed all of the competing calendars and drew charts of correspondences that will let you look up the CE equivalent of different Byzantine dating systems.⁷⁴ Don't try chronological work without checking Grumel.

Classicizing Terminology

Byzantine authors of classicizing histories often used ancient geographic names rather than contemporary equivalents. When writing in ancient Greek it would naturally look odd to include a new form of a city's name rather than its ancient name. In part because of this habit, in some cases we are better informed about classical than medieval geographic names. The new *Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire* has an invaluable list of classical, medieval, and modern place names.⁷⁵

The preference for classicizing names extended from geographic names to ethnic designations of various groups of people. In this case, the association of medieval reality with ancient ideals carried more ideological weight as medieval people were assimilated to ancient categories. Byzantine usage commonly assimilates a medieval group to an ancient group that seems to play the same political role or act in a similar way. The term "Scythian" was used for anyone riding horses who attacked the empire from beyond the Black Sea. When the ancient terminology cast medieval groups into

⁷⁴ Venance Grumel, *La Chronologie* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1958).

⁷⁵ Shepard, *The Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire, c. 500–1492*, 930–35.

subordinate roles of peoples that had been previously subjugated by the Romans, the classicizing terminology asserted a conceptual Roman dominance that may not have corresponded to medieval political realities.⁷⁶

One of the most important things to check when using a translation is whether the translator has preserved the medieval terminology for various groups. The medieval Romans' disinterest in contemporary names has frustrated some modern historians trying to recover the "reality" behind the Byzantine rhetoric. In some older translations, the translators tried to "correct" the Byzantine authors by substituting the "real" medieval names for the terminology of the source text. If the translator felt sure that the medieval author had meant Bulgarians when he said Mysians, the translation would read Bulgarians wherever the text said Mysians. Few now would see this as an appropriate step, but it was common practice for mid-twentieth century translations.

Language

When Byzantinists describe their texts, they often talk about "registers" or "levels" of Greek. These designations refer to how far the Greek of the text conformed to classical Attic Greek. Scholars commonly use metaphors of height to describe these differences; using "high style" for texts that closely mimic fifth-century BCE Attic Greek, "middling" or "mid-level" for texts closer to first-century *koine*, and "low" for texts that are further from classical norms.⁷⁷

Some medieval authors could choose to write deliberately in a higher or lower register for particular reasons. Yet to some extent the register an author chose was keyed to his level of education. The better educated the medieval author, the closer he or she was able to come to classical Attic. Authors of good, but not great, education would try to write in the *koine* Greek of the New Testament, which was still probably quite far from their street language. An author who is capable of writing high style could choose to write in a lower style, but an author who wrote in a simple *koine* may not have been capable of writing in an ornate high style.

Spoken medieval Greek seems to have sounded much like modern Greek. We know this because documents that have phonetic spelling mistakes

⁷⁶ Paul Stephenson, "Conceptions of Otherness After 1018," in *Strangers to Themselves: The Byzantine Outsider*, ed. Dion Smythe (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 245–57.

⁷⁷ Ihor Ševčenko, "Levels of Style in Byzantine Prose," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 31 (1982): 289–312.

give us a glimpse of how the writers would have heard the words. We don't know all that much about the grammar of commonly spoken Greek in the medieval period because we have to base our judgments on written texts, and everyone who was educated enough to write was trying to use classical Greek, or at least *koine*. The gradual evolution toward modern Greek can be traced through the medieval period, although these changes find hardly any reflection in the histories and chronicles.⁷⁸

Koine Greek was the somewhat simplified, standardized Greek used throughout the Eastern Mediterranean beginning in the Hellenistic era. After the conquests of Alexander the Great (356–323 BCE), Greek became an international language throughout the eastern Mediterranean, often functioning as a means of formal communication between communities alongside an entirely different local vernacular. This international language dropped some of the finer points of classical Greek as part of a natural simplification as it came to be used by non-native speakers. If you have singular and plural verb forms, do you really need a dual? The dual is lovely, but you can get your point across without it. The optative mood, used in classical Greek for verbs expressing possible, but as of yet unreal, states of being that you wish were real, was similarly dropped. *Koine* was not as refined and subtle a language as classical Greek, but it served well as an international language of commerce, communication, and cultural exchange. When the Aramaic-speaking disciples of Jesus put their hands to spreading the word about their new religion, the choice to write the Gospels in *koine* Greek was obvious.

At the same time that the Gospels were spreading stories about Jesus through the Eastern Mediterranean in *koine* Greek, well-educated rhetors were refining the study of classical Greek. In the second century CE the high-level of prosperity throughout the Eastern Mediterranean and the high prestige of classical Greek learning in Roman culture led to an expansion and refinement in teaching methodologies for high-quality Greek rhetoric. This flourishing of Greek training and rhetoric is called the Second Sophistic.⁷⁹ In this era teachers of rhetoric wrote textbooks and guides that helped students quickly learn how to participate in politics that required formal Greek rhetorical skills. The expansion of education with a common practical purpose led to a standardization and codification of proper Greek

⁷⁸ We can track some changes: Geoffrey C. Horrocks, *Greek: A History of the Language and Its Speakers*, 2nd ed. (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010); Robert Browning, *Medieval and Modern Greek*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

⁷⁹ Tim Whitmarsh, *The Second Sophistic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

style and form. Once there was a clear-cut “right way” to express a certain kind of argument, many more practitioners did it that way. The textbook phenomenon was part of an expansion of education and the entry of a great many more people into a common rhetorical culture. Good rhetorical training was no longer reserved for the native Greek aristocracy and a handful of their imperial Roman captors, but was common among elites throughout the Roman Empire. Not everyone writing high-style Greek in the second and third centuries was a literary genius, but some were and many more people were writing.

The development of the Second Sophistic culture of learning and rhetoric overlapped somewhat with the growth of Christianity. In the course of the fourth and fifth centuries, Christian intellectual leaders in the Eastern Mediterranean worked to create ways of practicing their religion while participating in the rhetorical culture that increasingly prized classical texts. However contentious the process was in late antiquity, they succeeded in creating a corpus of classicizing Christian texts, and a Christian means of appreciating ancient culture, that allowed for the deeply classicizing and Christian culture of the Medieval Roman Empire. Byzantine authors approached ancient Greek texts through the lens of Late Antique Christian classicism.

Transliteration

The spelling of Byzantine names in modern texts can be a nightmare of confusion. Please accept my apologies on behalf of Byzantinists everywhere. No one is trying to be deliberately obscure (okay, well, very few of us are), but ideas about how to best handle medieval Greek names in modern languages have changed over time, and we’re having trouble coming to a consensus now. In the eighteenth century, scholars writing in English began translating Greek names into Latin, and using the Latin names in English texts. So the scholar would look at a Greek name like *Komnenos* and create a Latin version “Comnenus,” or translate Nikephoros into “Nicephorus.” The step of translating the Greek name into Latin is something that comes naturally to people who have had a very expensive English education. For those of us outside of the Harrow, Eton, Hogwarts set, this seems cumbersome and unwarranted. What makes Comnenus more English than Komnenos? What exactly is wrong with “K?”⁸⁰

⁸⁰ If we’re going to take out a letter, why shouldn’t we dump C, which always sounds like either K or S?

I have no idea, but this was the standard usage up through the 1980s. Some scholars continue to use Latinized transliterations. Scholars working in French similarly made French versions of Greek names by passing them through Latin but then accenting them as if they were French, hence *Comnène*. Expect different versions in each different language of scholarship.

The other central difficulty is the custom of translating some Greek names into their English equivalents, when the latter are “common.” So *Ioannes* becomes John, and *Konstantinos* becomes Constantine. This leads to inconsistencies in judging which names are common enough to get an English version. Should *Eirene* become Irene? This practice becomes especially problematic in such an international field because *Ioannes* becomes not only John, but also Jean, Johannes, Giovanni, Juan, and Ivan. I think this usage arose out of reading of the Greek New Testament (easily the most widely read Greek text) where longstanding cultural knowledge that the Gospel was written by John (or Jean, etc.) made it seem natural to use that name rather than *Ioannes*. When dealing with names that are common in English because the Greek saints were important in English culture (Theodore, George, Gregory, Mary, Luke, Matthew, etc.), there is a natural impulse to use the English version. Sometimes Anglicized names are used because a strictly transliterated version may be confusing. If you start talking about *Konstantinos*, are all of your readers going to know you mean Constantine? Is everyone going to know that *Sokrates* is the same person as Socrates? Some scholars vigorously resist the practice of using English names to translate Greek ones, arguing that it denies the identity of medieval people and that it is part of the larger erasure of the medieval Roman Empire from history. This is an excellent point and many scholars are beginning to use strict transliterations of Greek even in the case of common English names. I have hesitated to follow suit in my own work only because the field needs to fight its tendencies toward obscurantism vigorously, and changing the names of half the characters seems likely to make things more confusing rather than less.

In this book we have tried to use the conventions followed in the *Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire*, which are sensible and consistent enough to have a chance at becoming standard.⁸¹ The editor opted for strict transliteration of Greek with exceptions for a fairly short list of names with common English equivalents.

⁸¹ Shepard, *The Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire*, c. 500–1492.

Major Publications and Series

Systematic study of Byzantine histories was bankrolled in the sixteenth century by merchants in Europe who had very practical concerns in fighting off the Ottoman Turks. The German merchant and banker Anton Fugger figured that since the eastern empire had resisted the advance of the Turks for centuries, he could learn how to do it by studying Byzantine history. He paid Hieronomus Wolf (1516–1580) to edit and translate histories of Zonaras, Choniates, and Pachymeres.⁸² Other humanists continued to publish editions Byzantine histories, sometimes with Latin translations, throughout the sixteenth century.⁸³

In the seventeenth century, French supporters of the regime of Louis XIV thought that the eastern empire could offer a good role model for how to run a government properly. Under royal sponsorship they produced 28 volumes of the *Corpus Historiae Byzantinae* between 1645 and 1688, with ten further supplements published by 1819.⁸⁴ This series of publications is known as the **Paris Corpus**. These volumes were reprinted in Venice between 1729 and 1733. These reprints are sometimes called the **Venice Corpus**.

Nineteenth-century interests in widespread access to texts spurred the publication of two major series of Byzantine texts. The most important for Byzantine historiography is the *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae*, often called the **Bonn Corpus**, published in Bonn between 1828 and 1897. The series was initially edited by Berthold Niebuhr and continued after his death by Immanuel Bekker. It included 50 volumes containing editions of most Byzantine histories and chronicles. Many of the volumes were actually reprints of editions made for the Paris Corpus or earlier publications. Each text was accompanied by a Latin translation, also often reprinted from sixteenth or seventeenth century publications. It was printed in great numbers and many university libraries acquired a set. It has now been digitized as part of the Hathi Trust.

⁸² Wolf, who would have much preferred working on classical texts, coined the term ‘Byzantine’ to distinguish between the classical Greek history he enjoyed and the Christian Greek history he did not. Hans-Georg Beck, “Hieronomus Wolf,” in *Ideen und Realitäten in Byzanz* (London: Variorum, 1972), 169–93.

⁸³ For a more thorough discussion of the history of the field see: Diether Reinsch, “The History of Editing Byzantine Historiographical Texts,” in *The Byzantine World*, ed. Paul Stephenson (London: Routledge, 2010). George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State*, trans. Joan Hussey, revised (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1969), 1–21.

⁸⁴ Reinsch, “The History of Editing Byzantine Historiographical Texts,” 440.

Byzantine histories were also published as a small part of the massive enterprises of the French priest Jacques Paul Migne (1800–1875). Migne aspired to make all of theological literature easily available to a wide public. Although not particularly well-educated, Migne presided over the publication of many hundreds of books. His most famous series are the *Patrologia Latina* in 218 volumes, and the *Patrologia Graeca* in 166 volumes, published between 1857 and 1866. These series were advertised as containing the whole of Greek and Latin theological writing. The *Patrologia Graeca* is commonly abbreviated **PG**. These two series are less than half of Migne’s publications. By selling relatively inexpensive subscriptions to a vast audience, he turned a tidy profit. This business model incentivized making the series as long as possible. The Byzantine histories that were included in the PG are not theological texts, but got swept up in Migne’s search for more texts to publish. The editions are usually reprints of earlier work.⁸⁵ The PG is available online: www.patristica.net/graeca/.

The publication of critical editions of Byzantine texts entered the modern era with the establishment of the **Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae**, under the direction of the Association internationale des études byzantines. The first volume was published in 1967 and work is ongoing. All the volumes are numbered sequentially within the CFHB series, but they are published by different publishers, and given different sub-series names, depending on where they are produced. The *Series Washingtonensis* is published by Dumbarton Oaks, the *Series Berolinensis* by De Gruyter, and *Series Vindobonensis* by the Austrian Academy, etc.

Manuscripts, Texts, and Editions

Throughout this study, the term “manuscript” refers to an extant physical book written by hand. A “text” may have been composed and written down at a moment centuries before our earliest surviving manuscript. In these cases, the text was written down in a manuscript that was copied later, and we have the copy, but not the original. Sometimes we have a copy of a copy of a copy. An “edition” refers to modern scholars’ attempt to reconstruct the original text. Often we will have several surviving manuscripts from different centuries that contain copies of a text. These usually have slight variations that creep in through the natural process of copying by hand. To create a critical edition, the modern editor will look at all the differences

⁸⁵ R. Howard Bloch, *God’s Plagiarist: Being an Account of the Fabulous Industry and Irregular Commerce of the Abbé Migne* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

and try to figure out what was most likely to have been the author's original wording.⁸⁶ For some of our later texts, it is possible that the manuscript we still have was the one that the author actually wrote, which is called the "autograph." We rarely have any basis on which to decide if a manuscript is an autograph.

Key Starting Points for Further Study

For a discussion of how the habits and traditions of Byzantine historical writing complicate our apprehension of the reality of past events:

Lilie, Ralph-Johannes. "Reality and Invention: Reflections on Byzantine Historiography." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 68 (2014): 157–210.

A reflective overview of middle and late Byzantine histories commenting on all the texts:

Magdalino, Paul. "Byzantine Historical Writing, 900–1400." In *The Oxford History of Historical Writing*, vol. 2, edited by Sarah Foot, Chase F. Robinson, and Daniel R. Woolf, 218–37. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

An essay on the coherence of Byzantine historical writing as an intellectual project:

Kaldellis, Anthony. "The Corpus of Byzantine Historiography: An Interpretive Essay." In *The Byzantine World*, edited by Paul Stephenson, 211–22. London: Routledge, 2010.

GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bibliographies on the individual historical works are listed in the entry for that work. The essays below either treat broad concerns or make points that are relevant for understanding historical writing beyond the particular text under discussion.

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⁸⁶ This methodology does not always make sense for Byzantine texts in the chronicle tradition because each person who made a copy of the chronicle was free to add, delete, or rearrange material. In these cases what would the 'original' version look like? Is that the version we should study? Additionally one of the main principles of classical text editing is that the Greek should be corrected to get back to the authentic ancient Greek vocabulary and syntax – getting rid of the influence of Byzantine copyists. For Byzantine authors, who tried to write in classical Greek to a greater or lesser extent, should editors 'fix' their 'errors' or see them as aspects of the medieval language?

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Theophylakt Simokatta

This classicizing history covers the reign of Maurice (582–602) in eight books, focusing on wars with the Avars and the Persians. It survives in a twelfth-century manuscript and two later copies. In the manuscript the work is titled *Ecumenical History*.¹ When the ninth-century scholar Photios described the work, however, he called it *Histories*.

The title of this text describes its author as Theophylakt the *apo eparchon* and *antigraphheus*.² These high-ranking titles indicate the author had a career in the imperial administration in Constantinople. The title of one of his other works describes him as a *scholastikos*, or lawyer.³ Photios recorded that Theophylakt was born in Egypt.⁴ The *Suda*, a tenth-century dictionary, lists Simokatta as Theophylakt's surname.⁵ The history mentions that one of the author's relatives held the position of *Augustalis* under Emperor Maurice (582–602).⁶ In addition to the history, Theophylakt wrote a theological treatise, an essay on natural oddities, and a collection of fictional letters between historical and mythical characters.⁷

The preface indicates that the history was intended as a continuation of the sixth-century historian Menander.⁸ In classicizing style, Theophylakt's history contains numerous set speeches and descriptions of battles. He also, however, intersperses stories of miracles in a way that weaves

¹ Carl de Boor and Peter Wirth, eds., *Historiae: Theophylactus Simocatta*, Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1972), index 1.

² *Ibid.*, 22.

³ The *Ethical Epistles*. Michael Whitby, *The Emperor Maurice and His Historian: Theophylakt Simocatta on Persian and Balkan Warfare* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 30.

⁴ René Henry, ed., *Bibliothèque, Photius*. Vol. 2 (Paris: Société d'édition "Les Belles Lettres," 1959), codex #65.

⁵ Ada Adler, ed., *Suda Lexicon*. Vol. 4 (Leipzig: Teubner, 1931), theta #201, sigma #435. The *Suda* also frequently quotes Theophylakt in its definitions of unusual words.

⁶ Whitby, *The Emperor Maurice*, 28; Boor and Wirth, *Historiae: Theophylactus Simocatta*, 310.

⁷ Whitby, *The Emperor Maurice*, 33–9.

⁸ Boor and Wirth, *Historiae: Theophylactus Simocatta*, 44–5.

specifically Christian interpretations of events into classical models of historical writing.⁹

Theophylakt's history was written in the reign of Heraclius and seems to reflect the politics of its time of composition. Maurice, the main subject of Theophylakt's history, was murdered along with his children by the usurper Phokas in 602. When Phokas (602–611) was overthrown in turn by Heraclius (611–641), Heraclius appears to have tried to honor the memory of Maurice. The last event mentioned in the history took place in 628. Whitby and Treadgold date the composition to the early 630s while Olajos and Schreiner prefer a range in the late 630s through early 640s.¹⁰

The history is preceded in the manuscript by a dialogue between Philosophy and History. Some scholars consider the dialogue to be a separate text rather than an introduction to the history.¹¹

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

The main manuscript of Theophylakt Simokatta's *History* is the twelfth-century *Codex Vaticanus Graecus 977*. There are other manuscripts that contain complete texts of the history, including the *Parisinus Supplement Graecus 292* and the *Athensiensis 1200*; however, both of these manuscripts are copies of the *Vaticanus* codex.¹² For a full discussion of the manuscript

⁹ Stephanos Efthymiadis, "A Historian and His Tragic Hero: A Literary Reading of Theophylakt Simokatta's Ecumenical History," in *History as Literature in Byzantium*, ed. Ruth Macrides (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 170; Herbert Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner* (Munich, 1978), 319.

¹⁰ Warren T. Treadgold, *The Early Byzantine Historians* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 333–4; Michael Whitby, *The Emperor Maurice and His Historian: Theophylact Simocatta on Persian and Balkan Warfare* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 39–40; Thérèse Olajos, *Les sources de Théophylacte Simocatta Historien*, *Byzantina Neerlandica* 10 (Leiden, 1988), 11; Peter Schreiner, *Geschichte: Theophylaktos Simokates* (Stuttgart: A. Hiersemann, 1985), 2–3.

¹¹ **Separate text:** Thérèse Olajos, "Contributions à une analyse de la genèse de l'Histoire Universelle de Théophylacte Simocatta," *Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 29 (1981): 417–18; Peter Schreiner, "Photios und Theophylaktos Simokates. Das Problem des 'Inhaltsverzeichnisses' im Geschichtswerk," in *Philellèn: Studies in Honour of Robert Browning*, ed. Costas N. Constantinides, Nikolaos Panagiotakes, and Elizabeth Jeffreys (Venice: Istituto ellenico di studi bizantini e postbizantini di Venezia, 1996), 391–8; Paul Speck, "Eine Gedächtnisfeier am Grabe des Maurikios: Die Historiæ des Theophylaktos Simokates: der Auftrag: die Fertigstellung; der Grundgedanke," in *Poikila Byzantina* 12, *Varia* 4 (Bonn: Habelt, 1993), 212–17. **Same text:** Whitby, *The Emperor Maurice*, 40–1; Joseph Frendo, "History and Panegyric in the Age of Heraclius: The Literary Background to the Composition of the 'Histories' of Theophylact Simocatta," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 42 (1988): 143–56.

¹² Thérèse Olajos, "Remarques sur la tradition manuscrite de l'Histoire Universelle de Théophylacte Simocatta," *Revue d'Histoire des Textes* 9 (1979): 261–6.

tradition of Theophylakt's history, see: Olajos, Thérèse. "Remarques sur la tradition manuscrite de *l'Histoire Universelle* de Théophylacte Simocatta." *Revue d'Histoire des Textes* 9 (1979): 261–6.

Edition

Wirth, Peter, ed. *Historiae: Theophylactus Simocatta*. Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana. Stuttgart: Teubner, 1972.

Publication History

A Latin translation was published by Jacob Pontanus in 1604. Pontanus's translation was published with an edition of the Greek by Charles Fabrot and Philippe Labbe for the Paris Corpus in 1647.¹³ This edition was reprinted as volume 21 of the Bonn Corpus in 1834.¹⁴ It was edited again by Carl de Boor in 1887.¹⁵ This edition was corrected by Peter Wirth in 1972.

Translations

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Greek

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¹³ Philippe Labbe, ed., *Corpus Byzantinae Historiae. Eclogæ Historicorum de Rebus Byzantinis*, trans. Jacob Pontanus (Paris: Ex Typographia Regia, 1647).

¹⁴ Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Theophylacti Simocattae historiarum libri octo*, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 22 (Bonn: Weber, 1834).

¹⁵ Carl de Boor, ed., *Theophylacti Simocattae Historiae* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1887).

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Paschal Chronicle

This text is found in the tenth-century *Codex Vaticanus Graecus 1941*. The early leaves of the manuscript, where one would normally find the author's name and title, have been lost. The modern title, "Paschal Chronicle" (from the Latin, "Chronicon Paschale"), derives from the author's interest in the correct dating of Easter. We know nothing about the author. Some scholars have speculated that the author was a member of the clergy,¹ while others suggest that he was a layman working in imperial administration.²

The Paschal Chronicle is both a universal history from the Creation until 628, as well as an extended argument about the proper calculation of the dates of liturgical feasts. The author is concerned with demonstrating that the liturgical cycle used in Constantinople employs the correct dates for both the moveable feasts, such as Easter, and the fixed feasts, such as Annunciation on March 15 or the Presentation in the Temple on February 2. The determination of the passage of time, as reckoned by both history and the movements of the stars, served to establish definitively the proper dates of liturgical celebrations. The enumeration of years plays a role in the author's efforts to establish a definitive chronology of human history. Each year is listed separately. Some key events of secular history are briefly described under the headings of the years so that the text also serves as a universal chronicle.

The Paschal Chronicle opens with a discussion of the proper method for correctly reckoning the date of Easter in accordance with solar and lunar cycles. Thereafter, the chronicle is a record of the passage of time, listing every year even if the author noted no significant events. Each year of Abraham's life is numbered and listed separately, including the first seventy-five when he was in Chaldea and not yet playing a role in sacred history.

¹ Michael Whitby and Mary Whitby, *Chronicon Paschale 284–628 AD* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1989), xxvii; Heinrich Gelzer, *Sextus Julius Africanus und die byzantinische Chronographie* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1885), 138.

² Warren T. Treadgold, *The Early Byzantine Historians* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 341–42.

The years and successions of the patriarchs, prophets, and kings of biblical history are enumerated. Starting with the first Olympiad, the author lists the passing of each Olympiad every four years, adding the Greek rulers into his enumeration of the kings of Judah. The births of Romulus and Remus are noted under the first year of the second Olympiad; thereafter, events of Roman history are also included. From the founding of the Roman Republic the names of the Roman consuls are listed for each year. The Roman fifteen-year Indiction cycle is noted from the time of Julius Caesar. The chronicle continues to use these systems for naming years through the end of the history.

As the author describes events closer to his own time, the entries for each year become more detailed and the text begins to look more like a history. The author indicates at the end of the prologue that his account will end in the year 630, but the last few pages of our manuscript are missing such that the text is cut off at the year 628. For the period nearest to the author's own time, the history focuses on political and military history from the perspective of Constantinople.

The Paschal Chronicle used the chronicle of John Malalas as a main source in addition to the Bible and the *Ecclesiastical History* of Eusebius.³ The author of the Paschal Chronicle argued that the Incarnation took place in *anno mundi* 5509, based on his calculation of the Easter cycle.⁴

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

There is one manuscript of the tenth century: *Codex Vaticanus Graecus 1941*. This manuscript contains lacunae indicating that it was copied from an already-damaged or incomplete exemplar. Three copies were made in the sixteenth century, apparently all from *Codex Vaticanus Graecus 1941*.⁵

Editions and Publication History

We lack a modern edition of this text. Christian Gastgeber and Erika Juhász are preparing a critical edition for Series Vindobonensis of *Corpus*

³ Whitby and Whitby, *Chronicon Paschale*, xv.

⁴ *Ibid.*, xiv.

⁵ On the manuscript, see Giovanni Mercati, "A Study of the Paschal Chronicle," *Journal of Theological Studies* 6 (1906): 397–412. See also Fred C. Conybeare, "The Codex of the Paschal Chronicle Used by Holstein," *Journal of Theological Studies* 7, no. 27 (1906): 392–97.

Fontium Historiae Byzantinae. It was first published by Matthew Raderi in Munich in 1615. Charles du Fresne DuCange edited it for the Paris Corpus in 1688, which was reprinted in Venice in 1729.⁶ It was edited again by Ludwig August Dindorf for the Bonn Corpus in 1832.⁷ The Dindorf edition was reproduced in Migne's *Patrologia Graeca* in 1860.⁸

Translations

English

Whitby, Mary and Michael Whitby, trans. *Chronicon Paschale 284–628 AD*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1989.

French (partial)

Beaucamp, Joëlle, René-Claude Bondoux, Jacques Lefort, Marie-France Rouan-Auzépy, and Irene Sorlin, trans. “Temps et histoire, I: Le prologue de la Chronique pascale.” *Travaux et Mémoires* 7 (1979): 223–301.

Russian

Samutkina, L. A., trans. *Paskal'naia Khronika*. Serii Vizantiiskaia Biblioteka. Istochniki. Saint Petersburg: Aleteïia, 2004.

Starting Point

Whitby, Mary. “The Biblical Past in John Malalas and the *Paschal Chronicle*.” In *From Rome to Constantinople: Studies in Honour of Averil Cameron*, edited by Hagit Amirav and Bas ter Haar Romeny, 279–302. Late Antique History and Religion. Leuven: Peeters, 2007.

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Beaucamp, Joëlle, René-Claude Bondoux, Jacques Lefort, Marie-France Rouan-Auzépy, and Irene Sorlin. “Temps et histoire, I: Le prologue de la Chronique pascale.” *Travaux et Mémoires* 7 (1979): 223–301.

⁶ Charles du Fresne DuCange, ed., *Paschalion, Seu, Chronicon Paschale a Mundo Condito Ad Heraclii Imperatoris Annum Vicesimum: Opus Hactenus Fastorum Siculorum Nomine Laudatum, Deinde Chronice Temporum Epitomes, Ac Denique Chronici Alexandrini Lemmate Vulgatum: Nunc Tandem Auctius et Emendatius Prodit, Cum Nova Latina Versione & Notis Chronicis Ac Historicis*. (Paris: Ex Typographia Regia, 1688).

⁷ Ludwig August Dindorf, ed., *Chronicon Paschale*. Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 16–17 (Bonn: Weber, 1832).

⁸ Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, vol. 92 (Paris: Apud J.-P. Migne, 1860).

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- Jeffreys, Elizabeth. “The Attitudes of Byzantine Chroniclers Towards Ancient History.” *Byzantion* 49 (1979): 199–238.
- Mosshammer, Alden A. *The Easter Computus and the Origins of the Christian Era*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

George Synkellos

This is an early ninth-century text swiftly covering history from Creation to 284 CE. The chronicle is called *Ekloge Chronographias* (Extract of Chronography) in one of the main manuscripts.¹ The title of this text attributes it to “George, monk and *synkellos* when Tarasios was Patriarch.” While the introduction states that the author intended to cover the period from Creation to the year 6300 (808 CE), the text ends in 284 CE. In another passage, the year 6302 (810 CE) is noted as the “current year.”² The preface to the Chronicle of Theophanes explains that it is a continuation of George’s work. How much of Theophanes’s chronicle was based on material prepared by George is a matter of debate.³

The text works to reconcile various systems of dating history and synchronize events from biblical history with ancient Mediterranean histories. It begins with an analysis and critique of previous chronographers, especially Julius Africanus and Eusebius. Whereas Africanus preferred a symbolic chronology (big round numbers in accordance with a prophetic view of history) without caring about non-Christian (Babylonian, Egyptian, etc.) traditions of history, and Eusebius worked to harmonize those traditions with biblical history – even when this meant admitting difficulties with biblical chronology – George’s text tried to create a harmonized universal history that proved the veracity of the biblical account at all

¹ *Codex Parisinus Graecus 1711*. William Adler and Paul Tuffin, *The Chronography of George Synkellos: A Byzantine Chronicle of Universal History from the Creation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), xxix.

² *Ibid.*

³ Cyril Mango, “Who Wrote the Chronicle of Theophanes?,” *Zbornik Radova Vizantinologičke Instituta* 18 (1978): 9–17; Ihor Ševčenko, “The Search for the Past in Byzantium around the Year 800,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 46 (1992): 279–93; Paul Speck, *Poikila Byzantina 9: Das Geteilte Dossier: Beobachtungen zu den Nachrichten über die Regierung des Kaisers Herakleios und die seiner Söhne bei Theophanes und Nikephoros* (Bonn: Habelt, 1988); Panayotis A. Yannopoulos, “Comme le dit Georges le Syncelle ou, je pense, Théophane,” *Byzantion* 74, no. 1 (2004): 139–46.

times. Torgerson characterizes it as an investigation into the “relationship between a timeless God and a time-bound Creation.”⁴

The first quarter of the chronicle deals with the great complexities of reckoning time before Abraham. The text is concerned with working out discrepancies between the Septuagint and various Hebrew versions of scripture. It lists biblical events under the “universal years” since Creation, but the names of kings and events from Egyptian, Babylonian, Greek and Latin history are interspersed, listed under their own headings. Things that do not fit neatly into any of the relevant headings are reported in a “miscellany” at the end of the section, after which it moves on to the next set of “universal years.” It also frequently includes quotations from other historians and chroniclers that are pertinent to the period under discussion. In an apparent effort to be thorough and judicious, the text sometimes includes quotations from scholars whose works it goes on to reject. The text has been valued for the excerpts it preserves of earlier works that are now lost.⁵

George Synkellos reckoned Incarnation as taking place on the first day of 5501 AM and the Resurrection as 5534. This dating system was prevalent in Palestine in the early ninth century.⁶

Not much is known about George. A *synkellos* was an advisor to the patriarch who nominally lived with him and was sometimes seen as the Patriarch’s designated successor. Tarasios, whom George served, was Patriarch from 784 to 806. Anastasius Bibliothecarius, who made a Latin version of the work in the ninth century, recorded that George suffered persecution because of his resistance to iconoclasm and was awarded the position of *synkellos* in recognition of his defense of icon veneration.⁷ Some scholars have argued that George may have visited or lived in Palestine for a time because of occasional references to having seen various local sites in his account of the events of Exodus,⁸ but these references could have already existed in the texts he was using.⁹ The chronicle of George the

⁴ Jesse Torgerson, “Time and Again: Early Medieval Chronography and the Recurring Holy First-Created Day of George Synkellos,” in *Time: Sense, Space, Structure*, ed. Nancy van Deusen and Leonard Koff (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 24. Adler and Tuffin, *The Chronography of George Synkellos*, xxx–xxx1.

⁵ *Ibid.*, lxxvii–lxxxiii.

⁶ Alden A. Mosshammer, *The Easter Computus and the Origins of the Christian Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 363.

⁷ Adler and Tuffin, *The Chronography of George Synkellos*, xxx.

⁸ *Ibid.*, xxx. His reference to frequent journeys to the Old Lavra of St. Chariton near Tekoa hints that perhaps he stayed in that monastery.

⁹ Vasile Grecu, “Hat Georgios Synkellos weite Reisen unternommen?,” *Bulletin de la section historique* 28 (1947): 242–45.

synkellos is mentioned in the preface to the works of Theophanes, Skylitzes, and Kedrenos.

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

There are two main manuscripts that date to the eleventh century, the *Codex Parisinus Graecus 1711* and *Codex Parisinus Graecus 1763*. Both descend from a common prototype. Ten other manuscripts from the ninth–sixteenth centuries contain at least some part of this text. A group of manuscripts descend from a prototype that began with the account of Pompey’s siege of Jerusalem. Based on analysis of all the manuscripts, Mosshammer argues that prior to 870 the chronicle likely circulated in two parts, with a second codex containing history from Pompey being more frequently copied and better preserved. For details of this complex manuscript history see the introduction to Mosshammer’s edition.¹⁰

Edition

Mosshammer, Alden A., ed. *Georgii Syncelli Ecloga Chronographica*. Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana. Leipzig: Teubner, 1984.

Publication History

Isaac Casaubon rediscovered the *Codex Parisinus Graecus 1711* at the turn of the sixteenth century in the national library in Paris and Joseph Scaliger published several sections of the manuscript in his 1606 work, *Thesaurus Temporum*.¹¹ Jacques Goar edited the manuscript for the Paris Corpus in 1652.¹² This edition was reprinted in Venice in

¹⁰ Mosshammer, *The Easter Computus and the Origins of the Christian Era*, 3–10. See also Alden Mosshammer, “The Barberini Manuscript of Georgius Syncellus (Vat. Barb. Gr.227),” *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 21, no. 3 (1980): 289. On *Paris Graecus 1711* see: Filippo Ronconi, “Juxtaposition / Assemblage de textes et histoire de la tradition: Le cas du Par. Gr. 1711,” in *The Legacy of Bernard de Montfaucon: Three Hundred Years of Studies on Greek Handwriting: Proceedings of the Seventh International Colloquium of Greek Paleography*, ed. Antonio Bravo García and Immaculada Pérez Martín (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 503–20.

¹¹ Adler and Tuffin, *The Chronography of George Synkellos*, lxxv.

¹² Jacques Goar, ed., *Georgii Monachi . . . quondam Syncelli Chronographia, ab Adamo usque ad Diocletianum. Et Nicephori patriarche Cp. Breviarium chronographicum, ab Adamo ad Michaelis & eius f. Theophili tempora* (Paris: Ex Typographia Regia, 1652).

1729.¹³ Wilhelm Dindorf revised Goar's edition of the history for the Bonn Corpus in 1829.¹⁴

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Mango, Cyril. "Who Wrote the Chronicle of Theophanes?" *Zbornik Radova Vizantinoloskog Instituta* 18 (1978): 9–17.

¹³ *Georgii Monachi et S.P.N. Tarasii patriarchae C.P. quondam Syncelli chronographia ab Adamo usq. ad Diocletianum. Et Nicephori patr. C.P. Breviarium Chronographicum ab Adamo ad Michaelis et eius F. Theophili tempora*. (Venice, 1729).

¹⁴ Wilhelm Dindorf and Jacques Goar, eds., *Georgius Syncellus et Nicephorus Cp.*, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 12–13 (Bonn: Weber, 1829).

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Chronicle of Theophanes

Theophanes's Chronicle covers the period from 284, where the Chronicle of George Synkellos ends, until 813. Theophanes's chronicle presents itself as a continuation of the history of George Synkellos. Theophanes explains that George had asked him to complete the task of compiling the history and had given Theophanes the materials he had gathered.¹ How far Theophanes should be credited with the authorship of his chronicle has been a matter of scholarly debate.²

It is one of few Byzantine texts that is a true chronicle, in that it enumerates every year, and lists events for each year.³ The entry for each year begins with a listing of the year of the world, the year since the Incarnation, the regnal year of the Roman Emperor, the Persian Emperor, and the bishops of Rome, Constantinople, Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch. After the conquest of the Persian Empire, it uses years of the rulers of the Arabs in place of the Persian Emperors. Despite the impression of chronological accuracy, many of these dates are mistaken. Scholars also debate whether these dates were integral to Theophanes's original Chronicle or were added by a later copyist.⁴

The coverage of events is uneven and sometimes thin. For periods in which he has good source material Theophanes may write several pages per year but for eras in which he is less well-informed, his entries are very

¹ Cyril A. Mango and Roger Scott, trans., *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine and Near Eastern History, AD 284–813* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 1–2.

² Mango argues that the person behind collecting material for the Chronicle (both for the earlier period and the last part) was George Synkellos and not Theophanes. Theophanes only made minor interventions in the dossier collected by George. On the contrary, Čičurov argues that Theophanes should be considered the author of the text. Cyril Mango, "Who Wrote the Chronicle of Theophanes?," *Zbornik Radova Vizantinoloskog Instituta* 18 (1978): 16. Igor S. Čičurov, "Feofan Ispovednik – Publikator, Redaktor, Avtor?," *Vizantijskii Vremennik* 67 (1981): 78–87. In addition see the section on authorship under "Further Reading."

³ Richard W. Burgess and Michael Kulikowski, *Mosaics of Time: The Latin Chronicle Traditions from the First Century BC to the Sixth Century AD*, *Studies in the Early Middle Ages* 33 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 30–31.

⁴ Mango and Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes*, lxi–lxiii.

short. For instance, his Chronicle contains only the listing of regnal dates for each year for 305–308.⁵ He includes significant information about developments about the seventh century Arab conquests and the development of the Arab polity.⁶

In the portions of his Chronicle from 284 until the advent iconoclasm in the middle of the eighth century, Theophanes does not insert his own authorial voice into his text significantly. He seems to be fairly impartially marshaling evidence, occasionally labeling an emperor as pious or impious but otherwise not inserting his value judgments into the history. Beginning with the iconoclast controversy in the reign of Leo III (717–741) however, he becomes deeply emotionally invested in telling a markedly moralizing story, in which his hatred of the iconoclast emperors is manifest. These sections sometimes read like an anti-iconoclast pamphlet and show more engagement in creating a rhetorically effective history.

Theophanes's Chronicle is one of our few continuous narratives covering the seventh and eighth centuries. It is therefore a highly important text for understanding the political history of this era, despite its tendentious and partisan stance toward eighth century history. Theophanes's strengths and shortcomings therefore have significant impact on any attempt to study the eighth century.

The issue of Theophanes's sources is complex and subject to a great deal of scholarly debate. Some scholars value Theophanes primarily for the earlier sources that he uses. Their research focuses on determining where his different information comes from and endeavoring to recreate, or at least learn about those earlier writers. Many of Theophanes's source texts no longer survive, and so this process of studying his sources provides scholars with information about texts they cannot otherwise access. Other scholars are more interested in Theophanes's role as a historian and study how he crafts his narrative and how his use of the older sources displays his own thinking about politics, theology, and history.⁷

Our knowledge of Theophanes's life derives from hagiography written about him as a saint of the Orthodox church. Theodore the Studite wrote a speech in praise of Theophanes, probably delivered in 822 when Theophanes's body was deposited in Theodore's monastery. A life of Theophanes was composed by the future patriarch Methodios before 832.⁸

⁵ Ibid., 22.

⁶ Ibid., 463–92.

⁷ Ibid., lxxiv–xcv. Also see the various sections under “Further Reading” below.

⁸ Mango and Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes*, xlv; Vasilii Latyshev, “Mefodiia patriarcha Konstantinopol'skogo Zhitie prep. Feofana Ispovednika,” *Mémoires de l'académie de Russie*, 8th Series,

Theophanes was born in Constantinople around 760. His father Isaac was a high-ranking military officer under Constantine V and his mother was named Theodora. Isaac and Theodora must have been of relatively high standing because the Emperor Constantine V served as young Theophanes's guardian after the death of his father. Theophanes married, but after a brief time he and his wife embraced monastic vocations. Theophanes founded the monastery of Megas Agros on the southern shore of the sea of Marmara and became its abbot. As a monastic leader, he participated in the Council of Nicaea in 787, which restored the veneration of icons. When the Emperor Leo V (813–820) began to revive iconoclasm, Theophanes supported the party that venerated icons. Theophanes was jailed for his opposition and exiled to Samothrace where he died in 818. Because of his persecution at the hands of an iconoclast Emperor he is often known as Theophanes the Confessor and recognized as a saint of the Orthodox Church.⁹

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

There are six manuscripts from the ninth to thirteenth centuries. On the complex manuscript tradition see Yannopoulos, Panayotis A. "Les vicissitudes historiques de la chronique de Théophane." *Byzantion* 70 (2000): 525–53.

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13, no. 4 (1918): 1–40; Stephanos Efthymiadis, "Le panégyrique de s. Théophane le Confesseur par s. Théodore Stoudite (BHG 1792b): édition critique du texte intégral," *Analecta Bollandiana: Revue critique d'hagiographie* III, no. 3–4 (1993): 259–90.

⁹ Mango and Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes*, xliii–lii.

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Patriarch Nikephoros

Nikephoros was an early ninth-century scholar credited with writing two historical texts: the *Istoria Syntomos* (also known as the *Breviarium*, or *Short History*) and the *Chronographikon Syntomon*. He was Patriarch from 806–815. Nikephoros also wrote letters and several treatises in defense of icon veneration.

Nikephoros was born in Constantinople in 757 or 758.¹ His father Theodore was an *asekretis*, or imperial secretary, who was exiled in the 760s for his refusal to support iconoclasm.² Theodore was recalled to the palace, but later exiled a second time. Nikephoros began his career as an imperial secretary, serving under the secretary Tarasios, who later became patriarch (784–806).³ After the death of Tarasios, Nikephoros was elected patriarch and moved through the ecclesiastical ranks within a week.⁴ In 814, Nikephoros objected to Emperor Leo V's (813–820) efforts to remove icons from public places. As a result, Nikephoros was deposed and retired to a monastery before dying in 828.⁵ He is regarded as a saint of the Orthodox Church.

Istoria Syntomos

The *Istoria Syntomos* is a brief account of Roman history from the accession of Phokas in 602 until the marriage of Leo VI to Irene in 769. This history appears to have been conceived as a continuation of that of Theophylact Simocatta.⁶ It is compiled in two parts: the first part spans the years 602

¹ Cyril Mango, ed., *Nikephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople: Short History*, trans. Cyril Mango (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1990), 1.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*, 10.

to 641, while the second resumes not immediately after, but rather in 668. The account then continues through 769.

Nikephoros provides a brief overview of military affairs (largely wars against the Persians and Arabs) as well as the imperial politics and religious policies of Constantinople. The policies of the iconoclast emperors are described unfavorably, although Nikephoros is less polemical in his treatment of them than is Theophanes. Nikephoros's coverage of the emperors is quite uneven. Emperor Phokas (602–610) receives only one paragraph that mostly recounts the narrative of Heraclius's (610–641) rebellion. The reign of Heraclius is covered in relative depth; however, the narrative breaks off suddenly in the year 641 and only resumes in 668 with the murder of Constans II (641–668). Although Nikephoros included far less information than Theophanes, most of what he does report is also in Theophanes. Scholars have speculated that Theophanes and Nikephoros had access to some of the same sources.⁷

The precise date for the composition of the *Istoria Syntomos* is unknown. Alexander contends that the *Istoria Syntomos* was compiled prior to 787 because of a reference to the Avar control of Pannonia.⁸ Ohnsorge and Speck suggest a date after 790 due to a reference that they interpret as a directed toward Empress Irene.⁹ Cyril Mango has proposed a date in the 780s.¹⁰ This early date is based on his understanding of Nikephoros's sources, which were favorable to the heretical Pyrrhos. The use of such a source, seemingly without recognizing the controversial nature of its biases, suggests to Mango that Nikephoros must have been a young man when he wrote the *Istoria Syntomos* and could not have been fully trained in ecclesiastical history.¹¹

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

There are two tenth-century manuscripts: *Codex Londinensis, Add. 19390*; and *Codex Vaticanus Graecus 977*. The version in *Londinensis* ends in 713.

⁷ Mango, *Nikephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople*, 10. Paul Speck, *Das geteilte Dossier: Beobachtungen zu den Nachrichten über die Regierung des Kaisers Herakleios und die seiner Söhne bei Theophanes und Nikephoros* (Bonn: Habelt, 1988); Paul Speck, *Kaiser Leon III, die Geschichtswerke des Nikephoros und des Theophanes und der Liber Pontificalis: eine quellenkritische Untersuchung* (Bonn: Habelt, 2002).

⁸ Mango, *Nikephoros*, 8.

⁹ *Ibid.*; Speck, *Das geteilte Dossier*, 429–30.

¹⁰ Mango, *Nikephoros*, 8.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 12.

The stylistic differences between *Vaticanus* and *Londinensis* suggest that *Londinensis* is a corrected version of *Vaticanus*.¹²

Edition

Mango, Cyril, ed. *Nikephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople: Short History*. Translated by Cyril Mango. Dumbarton Oaks Texts 10, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 13, Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1990.

Publication History

The *Istoria*, edited by Jacques Goar, was published in the Paris Corpus in 1652.¹³ Goar's edition was republished in the Venice Corpus in 1729.¹⁴ Denis Petau and Immanuel Bekker edited the text for the Bonn Corpus in 1837.¹⁵ Carl de Boor edited it for Teubner in 1880.¹⁶

Translations

English

Mango, Cyril, ed. *Nikephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople: Short History*. Dumbarton Oaks Texts 10, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 13, Translated by Cyril Mango. Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1990.

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Greek

Kōstarelē, Lina, trans. *Historia Syntomos: Nikēphoros Patriarchēs Kōnstantinoupoleōs*. Keimena Vyzantinēs Historiographias 4. Athens: Kanakē, 1994.

¹² Ibid., 5. Lajos Orosz, ed., *The London Manuscript of Nikephoros "Breviarium" = Nikephoros "Breviarium" – Anak Londoni Kézirat*, vol. 28, Magyar-Görög Tanulmányok (Budapest: Pázmány Péter Tudományegyetemi Görög Filológiai Intézet, 1948).

¹³ Jacques Goar, ed., *Georgii Monachi ... quondam Syncelli Chronographia, ab Adamo usque ad Diocletianum. Et Nicephori patriarche Cp. Breviarium chronographicum, ab Adamo ad Michaelis & eius f. Theophili tempora* (Paris: Ex Typographia Regia, 1652).

¹⁴ *Georgii Monachi et S.P.N. Tarasii patriarchae C.P. quondam Syncelli chronographia ab Adamo usq. ad Diocletianum. Et Nicephori patr. C.P. Breviarium Chronographicum ab Adamo ad Michaelis et eius F. Theophili tempora*. (Venice: Ex Typographia Bartholomaei Javarina, 1729).

¹⁵ Denis Petau and Immanuel Bekker, eds., *Sancti Nicephori Patriarchae Constantinopolitani Breviarium Rerum Post Mauricium Gestarum*, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 32 (Bonn: Weber, 1837).

¹⁶ Carl de Boor, ed., *Opuscula historia* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1880).

Starting Point

Mango, Cyril, ed. *Nikephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople: Short History*. Dumbarton Oaks Texts 10, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 13, Translated by Cyril Mango. Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1990.

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- Kindt, Bastien and Véronique Somers. *Thesaurus Nicephori Constantinopolitani, Breviarium Historicum*. Corpus Christianorum. Thesaurus Patrum Graecorum. Turnhout: Brepols, 2007.
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Chronographikon Syntomon

Nikephoros's name is also associated with the *Chronographikon Syntomon*, a brief collection of lists of:

- Biblical events from Adam to the Babylonian captivity
- Persian kings from Cyrus to Alexander's conquest
- Ptolemaic dynasty in Egypt from Ptolemy I to Cleopatra
- Emperors of Rome from Julius Caesar to Michael II
- Empresses of Rome from the wives of Constantius Chloros to Theophano, the wife of Leo VI
- Kings of the 10 tribes of Israel in Samaria
- Jewish High Priests from Aaron to the Roman sack of Jerusalem
- Bishops of Constantinople
- Bishops of Rome
- Bishops of Jerusalem
- Bishops of Antioch
- List of books of the Old and New Testaments, and Apocrypha, noting how many lines are in each.¹⁷

The *Chronographikon Syntomon* survives in many manuscripts although not all the manuscripts contain all of the lists. Some manuscripts attribute the text to Nikephoros and others present it anonymously.¹⁸ In some manuscripts, the lists of emperors and bishops extend to the tenth century.¹⁹

Anastasius Bibliothecarius made a Latin translation around the year 870.²⁰ There are several Slavonic versions of the text.²¹

Manuscripts

Mango describes the four oldest Greek manuscripts: *British Library, Add. 19390* of the early tenth century, *Oxford, Christ Church, Wake 5* of the late ninth century, *Moscow Hist. Museum 231* from 932, and *Jerusalem Patriarch Cod. 24* from the tenth century.²² De Boor describes eight other

¹⁷ Carl de Boor, ed., *Nicephori Archiepiscopi Constantinopolitani Opuscula Historica*, Reprinted New York: Arno Press, 1975, Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana (Leipzig: Teubner, 1880), 81–135; Mango, *Nikephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople: Short History*, 2–4.

¹⁸ Mango, *Nikephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople: Short History*, 4.

¹⁹ Herbert Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner: Philosophie, Rhetorik, Epistolographie, Geschichtsschreibung, Geographie*, vol. 1, Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft, 12.5 (Munich: Beck, 1978), 346.

²⁰ *Ibid.*; Boor, *Nicephori Archiepiscopi Constantinopolitani Opuscula Historica*, XXXV.

²¹ Mango, *Nikephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople: Short History*, 3.

²² *Ibid.*, 3–4.

manuscripts which form the basis of his edition.²³ For a brief listing of numerous additional manuscripts, see Colonna.²⁴

Edition and Publication History

De Boor, Carl. *Nicephori archiepiscopi Constantinopolitani opuscula historia*, Leipzig: Teubner, 1880, 79–135.

An edition by Joseph Juste Scaliger was published in 1606 and again with corrections by Alexander Morus in 1658.²⁵ An edition by Jacques Goar was published in the Paris Corpus in 1652 and reprinted in Venice in 1729. Wilhelm Dindorf edited the text and reprinted Goar's Latin translation and notes for the Bonn Corpus in 1829.²⁶ It was edited in 1832 by Karl August Credner and Christian Gottlieb Kühnöl, whose edition was reprinted in *Patrologia Graeca* vol. 100, pages 995–1060, in 1863.²⁷ It was edited again by Carl de Boor in 1880. However, Mango notes that de Boor's edition did not take into account the earliest manuscripts.

FURTHER READING

As a brief set of reference tables, this work has not been subject to much scholarly discussion. It is discussed concisely in the following:

Kazhdan, Alexander, Lee F. Sherry, and Christine Angelidi. *A History of Byzantine Literature, 650–850*. Athens: National Hellenic Research Foundation Institute for Byzantine Research, 1999; 208.

Külzer, Andreas. "Die Anfänge der Geschichte: zur Darstellung des 'Biblischen Zeitalters' in der byzantinischen Chronistik." *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 93, no. 1 (2000): 138–56.

Mango, Cyril, ed. *Nikephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople: Short History*. Translated by Cyril Mango. Dumbarton Oaks Texts 10, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 13, Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1990.

Ševčenko, Ihor. "The Search for the Past in Byzantium around the Year 800." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 46 (1992): 279–93, at 284–87.

²³ De Boor, *Nicephori Archiepiscopi Constantinopolitani Opuscula Historica*, xli–xlii.

²⁴ Maria Elisabetta Colonna, *Gli storici bizantini dal IV al XV secolo*. (Naples: Armanni, 1956), 87–88.

²⁵ Joseph Juste Scaliger, ed., *Thesaurus temporum* (Leiden: Excudebat Thomas Basson, sumptibus Commelinorum, 1606); Alexander Morus and Joseph-Juste Scaliger, eds. *Thesaurus temporum* . . . (Amsterdam: J. Janssonium, 1658).

²⁶ Wilhelm Dindorf, ed., *Georgius Syncellus et Nicephorus Cp.*, trans. Jacques Goar, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 12–13 (Bonn: Weber, 1829).

²⁷ Karl August Credner and Christian Gottlieb Kühnöl, eds., *Nicephori Chronographia Brevis*. (Gissae: Frid. Heyeri, 1832); Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologie cursus completus: Series graeca*, vol. 100 (Paris: Apud J.-P. Migne, 1863).

Scriptor Incertus de Leo V

The text known as the *Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio* is a brief, anonymous fragment of a history about the reigns of Michael I (811–813) and Leo V (813–820). The author is hostile to Leo V and his iconoclastic policies, but favorable to Patriarch Nikephoros.

Markopoulos suggests a date of composition between 820 and 829, but Ševčenko prefers a narrower window of 820–821.¹ Sénina argues that it was written between 844 and 847 by someone close to the Rhangabe family.² While scholars once thought that the same author wrote both the *Scriptor Incertus* and the *Chronicle of 811*, that view is no longer generally accepted.³

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations*Manuscript*

The only extant manuscript is *Codex Parisinus Graecus 1711*, dated 1013. This codex is also one of major exemplars of George Synkellos.⁴

Editions

Iadevaia, Francesca, ed. *Scriptor incertus: testo critico, traduzione e note*. Messina: Sfameni, 1997.

¹ Athanasios Markopoulos, “La Chronique de l’an 811 et le Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio: Problèmes des relations entre l’hagiographie et l’histoire,” *Revue des études Byzantines* 1999, 255–62; Ihor Ševčenko, “The Search for the Past in Byzantium around the Year 800,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 46 (1992): 279–93. See also Tatiana A. Sénina, “Remarques sur l’auteur et la date de Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio,” *Scrinium* 9 (2013): 399–409.

² Tatiana Sénina, “Remarques sur l’auteur et la date de Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio,” *Scrinium* 9, no. 1 (2013): 399–409.

³ Markopoulos, “La Chronique de l’an 811 et le Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio,” 261–62.

⁴ Filippo Ronconi, “Juxtaposition / Assemblage de textes et histoire de la tradition: Le cas du Par. Gr. 1711,” in *The Legacy of Bernard de Montfaucon: Three Hundred Years of Studies on Greek Handwriting: Proceedings of the Seventh International Colloquium of Greek Paleography*, ed. Antonio Bravo García and Immaculada Pérez Martín (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 503–20.

Forthcoming: Markopoulos, Athanasios, ed. *Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio*. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae: Series Berolinensis.

Publication History

The text was first published by François Combefis with a translation by Jacques Goar for the Paris Corpus in 1655.⁵ The *Scriptor Incertus* was published in the Bonn Corpus in 1842, with Goar's translation.⁶ In 1863 the *Patrologia Graeca* reprinted the work of Combefis and Goar.⁷

Translation

Italian

Iadevaia, Francesca, ed. *Scriptor Incertus: testo critico, traduzione e note*. Messina: Sfameni, 1997.

Starting Points

Stephenson, Paul. "About the Emperor Nikephoros and How He Leaves His Bones in Bulgaria: A Context for the Controversial Chronicle of 811." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 60 (2006): 87–109.

Kazhdan, Alexander, Lee F. Sherry, and Christine Angelidi. *A History of Byzantine Literature, 650–850*. Athens: National Hellenic Research Foundation Institute for Byzantine Research, 1999; 208–211.

FURTHER READING

Most scholarship has focused on whether this was originally part of the same text as the Chronicle of 811.

Different Texts

Kazhdan, Alexander, and Lee Francis Sherry. "Some Notes on the Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio." *Byzantinoslavica* 58 (1997): 110–12.

Markopoulos, Athanasios. "La Chronique de l'an 811 et le Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio: Problèmes des relations entre l'hagiographie et l'histoire." *Revue des études Byzantines* 57 (1999): 255–62.

⁵ François Combefis, ed., *Theophanis Chronographia – Leonis Grammatici Vitae recentiorum Imppp. Jacobus Goar... Latine reddidit, Theophanem notis illustravit, varias lectiones multiplici Codd. collatione adjecit... Franciscus Combefis iterum recensuit.*, trans. Jacques Goar (Paris: Ex Typographia Regia, 1655).

⁶ Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Leonis Grammatici Chronographia*, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 47 (Bonn: Weber, 1842), 335–62.

⁷ Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, vol. 108 (Paris: Apud J.-P. Migne, 1863), 1010–37.

- Sénina, Tatiana A. "Remarques sur l'auteur et la date de Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio." *Scrinium* 9, no. 1 (2013): 399–409.
- Sophoulis, Panos. "The 'Chronicle of 811', the Scriptor Incertus and the Byzantine-Bulgar Wars of the Early Ninth Century." *Bulgaria Mediaevalis* 1 (2010): 381–382.
- Stephenson, Paul. "About the Emperor Nikephoros and How He Leaves His Bones in Bulgaria: A Context for the Controversial Chronicle of 811." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 60 (2006): 87–109.

Same Text

- Browning, Robert. "Notes on the 'Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio.'" *Byzantion* 35 (1965): 389–411.
- Dujčev, Ivan. "La chronique Byzantine de l'an 811." *Travaux et Mémoires* 1 (1965): 205–54.
- Grégoire, Henri. "Un nouveau fragment du 'Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio.'" *Byzantion* 11 (1936): 417–27.
- Mango, Cyril. "The Two Lives of St. Ioannikios and the Bulgarians." In "Okeanos: Essays Presented to Ihor Ševčenko on His Sixtieth Birthday by His Colleagues and Students," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 7 (1983): 393–404.
- Ševčenko, Ihor. "The Search for the Past in Byzantium Around the Year 800." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 46 (1992): 279–93.

Chronicle of 811

The text known as the *Chronicle of 811* is sometimes called the *Dujčev Fragment*, named for its first editor. It is a brief text of several thousand words describing the invasion of Bulgaria led by Emperor Nikephoros I (803–811). The text is anonymous, although there has been a debate among scholars regarding whether the *Chronicle of 811* and the text known as the *Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio* are both fragments of the same, now lost, chronicle.¹ The current prevailing view is that the texts were separate and not written by the same person.²

The date of the text's composition is a matter of speculation and debate. A reference to the baptism of the Bulgarians in the final paragraph of the text leads some scholars to believe that it must have been written after 865,³ but this is dismissed as a later addition by others.⁴ For details on the debate see the bibliography below.

The text describes the invasion of Bulgaria by Nikephoros I. In this campaign, an initially successful Nikephoros sacked the capital of the

¹ Robert Browning, "Notes on the 'Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio,'" *Byzantion* 35 (1965): 389–411; Ivan Dujčev, ed., "La chronique Byzantine de l'an 811," in *Travaux et Mémoires* 1 (1965), 205–54; Henri Grégoire, "Un nouveau fragment du 'Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio,'" *Byzantion* 11 (1936): 417–27.

² Alexander Kazhdan and Lee Francis Sherry, "Some Notes on the Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio," *Byzantinoslavica* 58 (1997): 110–12; Athanasios Markopoulos, "La Chronique de l'an 811 et le Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio"; *Revue des études Byzantines* 57 (1999): 255–62; Paul Stephenson, "About the Emperor Nikephoros and How He Leaves His Bones in Bulgaria: A Context for the Controversial 'Chronicle of 811,'" *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 60 (2006): 87–109.

³ Kazhdan and Sherry, "Some Notes on the Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio"; Markopoulos, "La Chronique de l'an 811 et le Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio"; Lidija Tomić, "Fragmenti Jednog Istoriskog Spisa IX Veka," *Zbornik Radova Vizantoloskog Instituta* 1 (1952): 78–85.

⁴ Browning, "Notes on the 'Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio';" Grégoire, "Un nouveau fragment du 'Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio';" Cyril Mango, "The Two Lives of St. Ioannikios and the Bulgarians," *Okeanos: Essays Presented to Ibor Ševčenko on His Sixtieth Birthday by His Colleagues and Students; Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 7 (1983): 393–404; Stephenson, "About the Emperor Nikephoros and How He Leaves His Bones in Bulgaria: A Context for the Controversial 'Chronicle of 811'."

Bulgarian Khan Krum at Pliska. According to the text, Nikephoros's overconfidence led him to allow lax discipline among his soldiers and wantonly destructive pillaging. Krum counterattacked the Byzantine camp when Nikephoros's soldiers were still asleep. Nikephoros was killed in this attack, his son Staurakios was mortally wounded, and the majority of his army was slaughtered. The author makes this episode a morality tale with strong religious overtones during which Nikephoros is judged harshly for his lack of prudence and moderation. The story is distinctly elegiac and ends with a lamentation for the dead, especially the young military elite of the empire.⁵

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscript

This text is known from one thirteenth-century manuscript, *Vaticanus Graecus 2014*. In the manuscript it appears after two histories of the sieges of Constantinople in 626 and 717 and is followed by brief accounts of the lives of the empresses Irene and Theodora, and the emperor Theophilus.

Editions

Iadevaia, Francesca, ed. *Scriptor incertus: testo critico, traduzione e note*. Translated by Francesca Iadevaia. Messina: Sfameni, 1987.

Dujčev, Ivan, ed. "La chronique Byzantine de l'an 811." *Travaux et Mémoires* 1 (1965): 205–54.

"Novi Zitijni Danni Za Pochoda Na Nikifora I v Bŭlgarija Prez 811 God." *Spisanie Na Bulgarskata Akad. Na Naukite* 54 (1936): 147–88.

Grégoire, Henri. "Un nouveau fragment du 'Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio'." *Byzantion* 11 (1936): 417–27.

Translations

English

Stephenson, Paul. "About the Emperor Nikephoros and How He Leaves His Bones in Bulgaria: A Context for the Controversial 'Chronicle of 811'." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 60 (2006): 87–90.

⁵ Stephenson, "About the Emperor Nikephoros and How He Leaves His Bones in Bulgaria: A Context for the Controversial 'Chronicle of 811,'" 87–90.

French

Dujčev, Ivan. "La chronique Byzantine de l'an 811." *Travaux et Mémoires* 1 (1965): 205–54.

Italian

Iadevaia, Francesca, ed. *Scriptor incertus: testo critico, traduzione e note*. Translated by Francesca Iadevaia. Messina: Sfamemi, 1987.

Starting Point

Stephenson, Paul. "‘About the Emperor Nikephoros and How He Leaves His Bones in Bulgaria’: A Context for the Controversial ‘Chronicle of 811’." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 60 (2006): 87–109.

FURTHER READING

Suggesting Date after 864

Kazhdan, Alexander, and Lee Francis Sherry. "Some Notes on the Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio." *Byzantinoslavica* 58 (1997): 110–12.

Markopoulos, Athanasios. "La Chronique de l'an 811 et le Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio: problèmes des relations entre l'hagiographie et l'histoire." *Revue des études Byzantines* 57 (1999): 255–62.

Tomić, Lidija. "Fragments Jednog Istoriskog Spisa IX Veka." *Zbornik Radova Vizantološkog Instituta* 1 (1952): 78–85.

Suggesting Date before 864

Browning, Robert. "Notes on the ‘Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio’." *Byzantion* 35 (1965): 389–411.

Grégoire, Henri. "Un nouveau fragment du ‘Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio’." *Byzantion* 11 (1936): 417–27.

Mango, Cyril. "The Two Lives of St. Ioannikios and the Bulgarians." In "Okeanos: Essays Presented to Ihor Ševčenko on His Sixtieth Birthday by His Colleagues and Students," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 7 (1983): 393–404.

Suggesting Two Phases of Composition

Stephenson, Paul. "About the Emperor Nikephoros and How He Leaves His Bones in Bulgaria: A Context for the Controversial Chronicle of 811." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 60 (2006): 87–109.

Different Texts

Kazhdan, Alexander, and Lee Francis Sherry. "Some Notes on the Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio." *Byzantinoslavica* 58 (1997): 110–12.

- Markopoulos, Athanasios. "La Chronique de l'an 811 et le Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio: Problèmes des relations entre l'hagiographie et l'histoire." *Revue des études Byzantines* 57 (1999): 255–62.
- Stephenson, Paul. "About the Emperor Nikephoros and How He Leaves His Bones in Bulgaria: A Context for the Controversial Chronicle of 811." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 60 (2006): 87–109.

Same Text

- Browning, Robert. "Notes on the 'Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio'." *Byzantion* 35 (1965): 389–411.
- Dujčev, Ivan. "La chronique Byzantine de l'an 811." *Travaux et Mémoires* 1 (1965): 205–54.
- Grégoire, Henri. "Un nouveau fragment du 'Scriptor Incertus de Leone Armenio'." *Byzantion* 11 (1936): 417–27.

Megas Chronographos

The tenth-century manuscript of the Paschal Chronicle, *Codex Vaticanus Graecus 1941*, contains excerpts of another text that are labeled as being from the Great Chronographer, the *Megas Chronographos*. The extracts concern natural and political disasters from the fifth to eighth centuries.

Some scholars have speculated that the work of the Great Chronographer was the common source for the information in the *Chronicle* of Theophanes and the *Short History* of Patriarch Nikephoros.¹ It was supposed that this historian worked in the eighth century during the reigns of Constantine V or Leo IV. Further research, however, has shown fairly conclusively that the Great Chronographer drew some of his material from Theophanes and Nikephoros, rather than the other way around.² The work of the *Megas Chronographos* is now generally thought to be a compilation of the mid-ninth century.

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscript

Megas Chronographos is in the tenth-century manuscript *Vaticanus Graecus 1941*.

Editions

Schreiner, Peter. *Die Byzantinischen Kleinchroniken*. Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1975.

¹ Whitby, L. Michael "The Great Chronographer and Theophanes." *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 8, no. 1 (1982): 1–20.

² Mango, Cyril. "The Breviarium of the Patriarch Nicephorus." In *Vyzantion: apherōma ston Andrea N. Strato / Byzantium: Tribute to Andreas N. Stratos*, ed. Nia Stratos, 2: 545–48. Athens: N. Stratos, 1986.

Cramer, John Anthony *Anecdota Graeca e Codd. Manuscriptis Bibliothecae Regiae Parisiensis*. Oxford: E Typographeo Academico, 1839.

Translation

Whitby, Michael and Mary Whitby, trans. *Chronicon Paschale 284–628 AD*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1989. Appendix II provides a discussion and translation of the excerpts from the *Megas Chronographos*.

FURTHER READING

Alexander, Paul Julius. *The Patriarch Nicephorus of Constantinople*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958; 158–62.

Meier, Mischa. “Die Erdbeben der Jahre 542 und 554 in der byzantinischen Überlieferung. Quellenkritische Überlegungen zur Geschichte des 6. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.” *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 130 (2000): 287–95.

Mango, Cyril. “The Breviarium of the Patriarch Nicephorus.” In *Vyzantion: aphierōma ston Andrea N. Strato / Byzantium: Tribute to Andreas N. Stratos*, edited by Nia Stratos, 545–48. Athens: N. Stratos, 1986.

Speck, Paul. *Kaiser Leon III., die Geschichtswerke des Nikephoros und des Theophanes und der Liber Pontificalis: eine quellenkritische Untersuchung*. Bonn: Habelt, 2002.

Das geteilte Dossier: Beobachtungen zu den Nachrichten über die Regierung des Kaisers Herakleios und die seiner Söhne bei Theophanes und Nikephoros. Bonn: Habelt, 1988.

Whitby, L. Michael “The Great Chronographer and Theophanes.” *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 8, no. 1 (1982): 1–20.

George the Monk

This text is one of the most popular Byzantine historical works, covering Creation to the ninth century. It treats the whole story of history with lots of entertaining stories and digressions on theology. It is entitled *Brief chronicle (chronikon syntomon) Collected, Combined and Interpreted from various chroniclers by George the Monk and Sinner*. Nothing else is known of George, who is commonly called either George the Monk or George Hamartolos (from the Greek word for sinner).

There are two variants of the text. The earlier version is known from the tenth or early eleventh-century manuscript *Coislinianus 305* and a one-page fragment in the tenth-century manuscript *Vindobonensis Theologicus Graecus 121*. This version appears to have been written in 846/847.¹ A Slavonic translation of the first version was made in the fourteenth century, apparently based on a better Greek manuscript than our surviving *Coislinianus 305*.² The Slavonic translation is known as the “Letovnik.” The later version of the Greek text, sometimes called the “Vulgate,” is a revision compiled in the last quarter of the ninth century.³ It is known from twenty-nine manuscripts and contains interpolations of material added after 871.⁴

The text covers the period from Creation to 842. The work is notable for including numerous amusing and moralizing stories, many of which do not have much to do with specific historical events. In some cases, we can tell that the author highlighted moral lessons to be drawn from an episode, but disregarded the chronological placement of the episode

¹ Dmitri Afinogenov, “Le manuscrit grec Coislin. 305: la version primitive de la Chronique de Georges le Moine,” *Revue des études Byzantines* 62, no. 1 (2004): 239–46.

² *Ibid.*, 241.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Dmitri Afinogenov, “The Date of Georgios Monachos Reconsidered,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 92 (1999): 437–47; Athanasios Markopoulos, “Symbolē stē chronologēsē tou Geōrgiou Monachou,” *Symmeikta* 6 (1985): 223–31.

within his source material. George has been characterized as a “short-story” writer.⁵ By one count, the text includes forty-four discrete stories about bishops, monks, the destiny of the soul, heroic chastity and martyrdom, and pagans, Jews, and iconoclasts.⁶ The sources of the narratives seem to have been hagiographies and collections of monks’ proverbs, along with a number of spiritually beneficial stories.⁷ Some of the stories from this text appear to have circulated separately from the rest of the history.⁸ The text also includes long polemics against Jews, various heretics, and iconoclast emperors. These theological digressions sometimes take the form of long strings of quotations.

Book 1 begins by enumerating the children of Adam, but moves into discussions describing ancient Greek deities as kings of various states; for example, Chronos was ruler of Assyria.⁹ This book discusses various ancient rulers such as Sardanapallos,¹⁰ Perseus,¹¹ Pharaoh,¹² Pelops,¹³ Cyrus,¹⁴ Romulus and Remus,¹⁵ and Alexander of Macedon.¹⁶ Much of this material seems to derive from Malalas. Book 2 goes back to Adam and discusses his descendants and biblical patriarchs through Serug.¹⁷ There is then a long theological digression discussing ancient deities and Hellenic religion, drawing in part on Athanasius of Alexandria’s *Contra gentes* and *de Incarnatione*, and works of Theodoret of Cyrus.¹⁸ The text then returns to biblical patriarchs from Nahor to Joshua.¹⁹

Book 3 enumerates the biblical judges²⁰ and discusses Sampson, Eli, and Samuel.²¹ Book 4 tells the story of Saul, David, and Solomon with

⁵ Marina Detoraki, “Chronicon animae utile: la Chronique de Georges le Moine et les récits édifiant,” in *Myriobiblos: Essays on Byzantine Literature and Culture*, ed. Theodora Antonopoulou, Sofia Kotzabassi, and Marina Loukaki, *Byzantinisches Archiv* 29 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 103–30.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Marie-Aude Monégier du Sorbier, “Quatre extraits de la ‘Chronique’ de Georges le Moine,” *Revue d’Histoire des Textes* 22 (1992): 269–88.

⁹ Carl de Boor and Peter Wirth, eds., *Georgius Monachus: Chronicon*, Ed. stereotypa anni 1904 / correctiorem curavit Peter Wirth, *Bibliotheca scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana* (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1978), 11–12.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 13–14.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 14–15.

¹² *Ibid.*, 15–18.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 18–20.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 21–23.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 25–43.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 43–57.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 58–92.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 92–145.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 145–53.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 153–66.

theological digressions,²² then continues with Solomon's successors to Hezekiah,²³ who prompts a theological discussion that cites Chrysostom and Patriarch Nikephoros.²⁴ The narrative then resumes its descriptions of kings from Manasseh to Zedekiah.²⁵ Book 5 continues the chronology of the kings of Israel from Jeroboam to Hoshea. Book 6 turns to the Babylonian kings Nebuchadnezzar, Amel-Marduk, and Balthazar,²⁶ the Persian kings Cyrus, Cambyses, and Darius,²⁷ and Alexander of Macedon. Book 7 treats Antiochus and his sons.²⁸

Book 8 begins with Julius Caesar and covers Roman emperors up to Constantine, with long theological discussions of the Incarnation and careers of the apostles and theologians, citing various patristic theologians. A defense of monasticism, explicitly aimed at refuting the objections of the iconoclast emperor Constantine V "Kopronymos" (741–775), invokes Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, John Chrysostom, Theodoret, Paul, Plato, Socrates, and Chiron the centaur as supporters of righteous living.²⁹ A long review and exegesis of Jewish history is placed in the section on Vespasian.³⁰ Book 9, by far the longest at 315 of the 804 pages of the de Boor edition, uses the reigns of the Roman emperors from Constantine to Michael III as a structure upon which to hang not only information about events in each reign, but edifying stories and substantial extracts from patristic theologians. The line of emperors flows from Theodosius I to Arcadius and his successors in Constantinople, with scant mention of the remaining western emperors.³¹ The discussion of each emperor opens with a brief listing of when he reigned and major events that occurred under his rule, followed by a far longer section of stories and digressions loosely connected to the time of that reign.³²

This text thus inscribes all of history in a chain of rulers going all the way back to Adam. The impression is that there was only ever one person ruling at a time. The time before the Roman emperors had patriarchs, judges, kings, Babylonian, Persian, and Macedonian rulers, but the

²² Ibid., 166–212.

²³ Ibid., 212–21.

²⁴ Ibid., 222–35.

²⁵ Ibid., 235–51.

²⁶ Ibid., 264–71.

²⁷ Ibid., 272–84.

²⁸ Ibid., 286–93.

²⁹ Ibid., 338–64.

³⁰ Ibid., 387–433.

³¹ Ibid., 592.

³² Jakov Ljubarskij, "George the Monk as a Short-Story Writer," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 44 (1994): 256.

opening of each section follows the reliable formula: after x, y ruled for so many years. While the lengthy theological digressions can break up the flow of events, everything is pegged to a moment when a particular ruler was in charge.

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

The numerous manuscripts and their complex relationships are described by Carl de Boor.³³

Editions (of the Vulgate Version)

De Boor, Carl, and Peter Wirth, eds. *Georgius Monachus: Chronicon*. Ed. stereotypa anni 1904 / correctiorem curavit Peter Wirth. Bibliotheca scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana. Stuttgart: Teubner, 1978. Originally printed 1904.

Publication History

The section of the text beginning with Leo V was published by François Combefis for the Paris Corpus in 1685, based on *Paris Graecus 1708*.³⁴ The section covering 813–945 was again edited and published by Immanuel Bekker as volume 33 of the Bonn Corpus.³⁵ A full version of the text was published, along with various continuations up to 1143 in 1859 by Eduard von Muralt.³⁶ Muralt's edition was reprinted in the *Patrologia Graeca* volume 110.³⁷

³³ De Boor and Wirth, eds., *Georgius Monachus: Chronicon*, Ed. stereotypa anni 1904 / correctiorem curavit Peter Wirth, Bibliotheca scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1978), v–lx.

³⁴ For a description of early efforts to publish the text see: Ibid., v–xi.

³⁵ Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Theophanes continuatus, Ioannes Cameniata, Symeon Magister [i.e. Pseudo-Symeon]*, *Georgius Monachus*, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 33 (Bonn: Weber, 1838).

³⁶ Eduard von Muralt, ed., *Georgii Monachi, dicti Hamartoli Ghronicon (sic) ab orbe condito ad annum P. Chr. N. 842 et a diversis scriptoribus usque ad a. 1143 continuatum nunc primum ad fidem codicis Mosquensis, adjecta passim varietate reliquorum codicum nec non Leonis Grammatici et Cedreni et annotatis locis s. scripturae, patrum ecclesiast. et ceterorum scriptorum in chronico laudatis annisque ante et post Chr. n. in margine adscriptis* (St. Petersburg: Tipis Academiae Caesareae scientiarum, 1859).

³⁷ Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, vol. 110 (Paris: Apud J.-P. Migne, 1857).

Edition of the Slavonic Version

- Istrin, Vasili. Mikhailovich, ed. *Knigi vremen' nia i obraznia Georgiia mnikha: khronika Georgiia Amartola v drevnem slavianorusskom perevodie: Tekst, izsledovanie i slovar'*. Petrograd: Otd-niia Russkago iazyka i slovesnosti Ros. Akademii nauk, 1920; reprinted in: Idem, ed. *Die Chronik des Georgios Hamartolos: In altslavischer Übersetzung*. Reprint. Slavische Propyläen 135, 1–2. Munich: W. Fink, 1972.
- Matveenko, Vera A, and Ljudmila I Ščegoleva, eds. *Knigi vremenne i obrazne: v dvuch tomach T. 1., Č. 2 Tekstologičeskii kommentarii*. 2 vols. Moscow: Nauka, 2006. Reprinted 2011.

Starting Points

- Afinogenov, Dmitry E. "Some Observations on Genres of Byzantine Historiography." *Byzantion* 62 (1992): 13–33.
- Ljubarskij, Jakov. "George the Monk as a Short-Story Writer." *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 44 (1994): 255–64.

FURTHER READING

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- "Kompozicija chroniki Georgija Amartola." *Vizantijskij Vremennik* 52 (1991): 102–12.
- "A Lost 8th C. Pamphlet against Leo III and Constantine V?" *Eranos* 100 (2002): 1–17.
- "Le manuscrit grec Coislin. 305: la version primitive de la Chronique de Georges le Moine." *Revue des études Byzantines* 62, no. 1 (2004): 239–46.
- "The Story of the Patriarch Constantine II of Constantinople in Theophanes and George the Monk: Transformations of a Narrative." In *History as Literature in Byzantium*, edited by Ruth Macrides, 207–14. Farnham: Ashgate, 2010.
- Detoraki, Marina. "Chronicon animae utile: la chronique de Georges le Moine et les récits édifiant." In *Myriobiblos: Essays on Byzantine Literature and Culture*, edited by Theodora Antonopoulou, Sofia Kotzabassi, and Marina Loukaki, 103–30. *Byzantisches Archiv* 29. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015.
- Külzer, Andreas. "Die Anfänge der Geschichte: zur Darstellung des 'Biblischen Zeitalters' in der Byzantinischen Chronistik." *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 93, no. 1 (2000): 138–56.
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- Monégier du Sorbier, Marie-Aude. "Le Vat. gr. 1246, témoin d'une version perdue de la Chronique de Georges le Moine." *Revue d'Histoire des Textes* 19, no. 1989 (1990): 369–79.

- “Quatre extraits de la ‘Chronique’ de Georges le Moine.” *Revue d’Histoire des Textes* 22 (1992): 269–88.
- Papaioannou, Stratis. “The Aesthetics of History: From Theophanes to Eustathios.” In *History as Literature in Byzantium*, edited by Ruth Macrides, 3–21. Farnham: Ashgate, 2010.
- Petrova, Maya. “Hamartolos or Zonaras: Searching for the Author of a Chronicle in a Fourteenth-Century Slavic Manuscript: MS. Slav. 321 from the Library of RAS.” *Scripta & E-Scripta*, no. 8–9 (2010): 405–25.

Peter of Alexandria

This text is entitled “Summary Exposition of History from Adam Until Now, by the Orthodox and Christian Peter of Alexandria.” We do not know anything else about Peter. The text is seventeen pages long in the modern edition and goes from Creation to Leo VI (886).

This text contains a brief listing of the times between the births of biblical patriarchs, lists of peoples found in various regions of the world, the peoples descended from the sons of Noah, events that took place in northern and eastern parts of the world, reckonings of the number of years between major biblical events, years of biblical judges, kings and prophets, lists of kings of Egypt, lists of emperors of Rome, and emperors of New Rome up to Leo VI.

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations*Manuscripts*

The text survives in a manuscript stylistically dated to the tenth century: *Coislinianus 229*, which was brought from France to Moscow Imperial University in the early nineteenth century. A second manuscript of the text was destroyed in Dresden during the Second World War. The edition is based on the Moscow manuscript.¹

Edition

Samodurova, Zinaida., ed. “Khronika Petra Aleksandriiskogo.” *Vizantiiskii vremennik* 18 (1961): 180–97.

¹ Zinaida Samodurova, “Khronika Petra Aleksandriiskogo,” *Vizantiiskii vremennik* 18 (1961): 180–97; Maria Elisabetta Colonna, *Gli storici bizantini dal IV al XV secolo*. (Naples: Armanni, 1956), 98.

Starting Points

- Hunger, Herbert. *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner: Philosophie, Rhetorik, Epistolographie, Geschichtsschreibung, Geographie*. vol. 1. Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft, 12.5. Munich: Beck, 1978, 360.
- Külzer, Andreas. "Die Anfänge der Geschichte: zur Darstellung des 'Biblischen Zeitalters' in der byzantinischen Chronistik." *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 93, no. 1 (2000): 138–56.

CHAPTER II

Genesisios



This text, entitled *Basileiai*, “Emperors,” is found in one eleventh-century manuscript, *Codex Lipsiens Graecus 16*. It is a history covering 813–886 in roughly 100 pages. The history has one book on each emperor: Leo V (813–820), Michael II (820–829), Theophilos (829–842), and Michael III (843–867). The book on Michael III is considerably longer than the others, and includes a cursory account of the reign of Basil I (867–886).

The preface to the *Genesisios* text says that it was written at the behest of Constantine VII, who requested an account of events not yet chronicled, beginning with the reign of Leo V (i.e., since the end of the Chronicle of Theophanes). Constantine VII also commissioned the first two texts of the collection known as *Theophanes Continuatus* (Books I–IV/Text I and Book V/Text II/*Vita Basilii*). Constantine VII presumably commissioned histories of this period to help justify the actions of his grandfather Basil I in his ascension to the throne through the murder of Michael III.

The *Genesisios* text contains much of the same information as the first part of *Theophanes Continuatus* (Books I–IV/Text I). Careful comparison of the two texts has shown that one did not copy the other, but rather that they both used a common source – which seems to have been a dossier of documents rather than a set text.¹ Most scholars now think that

¹ Franjo Barišić, “Génésios et le Continuateur de Théophane,” *Byzantion* 28 (1958): 119–33; Athanasios Markopoulos, “Genesisios: A Study,” in *Realia Byzantina*, ed. Sofia Kotzabassi and Giannis Mavromatis, *Byzantinisches Archiv* 22 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009), 145–46. Michael Featherstone and Juan Signes Codoñer, eds., *Chronographiae Quae Theophanis Continuati Nomine Fertur Libri I–IV: Recensuerunt Anglice Verterunt Indicibus Instruxerunt Michael Featherstone et Juan Signes-Codoñer; Nuper Repertis Schedis Caroli de Boor Adiuuantibus*, *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* 53 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 11–13; Juan Signes Codoñer, *El periodo del segundo iconoclasmo en Theophanes continuatus: análisis y comentario de los tres primeros libros de la crónica* (Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1995); Juan Signes Codoñer, “Constantino Porfirogénito y la fuente común de Genesisios y Theophanes Continuatus I–IV,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 86–87 (1993–1994): 319–41; Paul Magdalino, “Knowledge in Authority and Authorised History: The Imperial Intellectual Programme of Leo VI and Constantine VII,” in *Authority in Byzantium*, ed. Pamela Armstrong (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 201–2. Ljubarskij argued for a common source that was a chronicle that arranged material into schematic lists. Jakov

Constantine VII first gave the dossier of sources to the author of *Genesisios*, but was dissatisfied with the resulting history. Constantine then gave the same dossier to the author of Books I–IV of “*Theophanes Continuatus*,” who created a history that was more favorable to Constantine’s family. In addition to being less favorable to Constantine VII’s family, *Genesisios* is simply not as well-written as Books I–IV, which leads to the theory that Constantine wanted his project to be re-done.²

While favorable to Basil I, this text is less condemnatory of Michael III and less fulsome in its praise of Basil than Books I–IV / Text I of *Theophanes Continuatus*. In comparison with the later text, *Genesisios* gives less attention to the ideological and propagandistic thrust of the narrative and is lacking in “narrative incisiveness.”³ The prose style is considered convoluted and unclear.⁴

In addition to the source common to both *Genesisios* and Books I–IV/Text I of *Theophanes Continuatus*, the author drew on Ignatios the Deacon’s biography of Patriarch Nikephoros and the life of Patriarch Ignatios by Niketas David Paphlagon.⁵

Treadgold believes that the common source of *Genesisios* and Books I–IV/Text I *Theophanes Continuatus* was a no-longer-extant text he calls the *Secret History* of Niketas David the Paphlagonian.⁶ Niketas David is known as the author of the life of Patriarch Ignatios, and some scholars attribute to him a lost ecclesiastical history,⁷ but Treadgold is alone in thinking that Niketas also wrote a secular history and his argument is purely speculative.

The *Genesisios* text seems to have been written in the middle of the tenth century. If it is correct that this narrative was the result of Constantine VII’s

Ljubarskij, “*Theophanes Continuatus* und *Genesisios*: Das Problem einer gemeinsamen Quelle,” *Byzantinoslavica* 48, no. 1 (1987): 12–27.

² Markopoulos, “*Genesisios*: A Study,” 149; Barišić, “*Génésios* et le Continuateur de Théophane”; Featherstone and Signes Codoñer, *Theophanis Continuati*, 11–13.

³ Markopoulos, “*Genesisios*,” quote on 144.

⁴ Anthony Kaldellis, *Joseph Genesisios: On the Reigns of the Emperors*, (Canberra: Australian Associate for Byzantine Studies, 1998), xxv.

⁵ Ferdinand Hirsch, *Byzantinische Studien*, (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1876), 127–28, 159–61; Kazhdan, “Iz Istorii Vizantiiskoi Chronographi X v. 3. Kniga Carei i Zizneopisania Vasiliia,” 151–52; Apostolos D. Karpozilos, *Vyzantinoi historikoi kai chronographoi*, vol. 2 (Athens: Kanakē, 2002), 319–29.

⁶ Warren T. Treadgold, *The Middle Byzantine Historians* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 134–52.

⁷ Symeon Paschalides, “From Hagiography to Historiography: the Case of the Vita Ignatii (BHG 817) by Nicetas David the Paphlagonian,” in *Les vies des saints à Byzance: genre littéraire ou biographie historique?*, ed. Paolo Odorico and Panagiotis A. Agapitos, *Dossiers byzantins* 4 (Paris: Centre d’études byzantines, néo-helléniques et sud-est européennes, École des hautes études en sciences sociales, 2004), 161–73; Magdalino, “Knowledge in Authority and Authorised History: The Imperial Intellectual Programme of Leo VI and Constantine VII,” 198.

first attempt to commission a history of this period, it must have been written before Books I–IV/Text I of *Theophanes Continuatus*. The author seems not to have known about the reconquest of Crete in 961, so it was likely written before then.⁸ Based on references in the text to the emirs of Crete, Kaldellis has argued that an initial version was written just before or even during the reign of Romanos I (920–944) and then revised after the accession of Constantine VII.⁹ The list of emirs of Crete, however, may well have been compiled in an earlier source and excerpted by the author of Genesisios.¹⁰

A marginal note in a fourteenth-century hand indicates that the author was “Genesisios.” The text is often said to be the work of “Joseph Genesisios” because the preface to Skylitzes’s history mentions “Joseph Genesisios and Manuel” as authors of history. Yet, since Skylitzes never elsewhere uses a surname without an article, this may well refer to three historians, Joseph, Genesisios, and Manuel.¹¹ The fourteenth-century commentator may have had other information that allowed him to identify the author of this text as “Genesisios,” but, much like modern historians, he may have guessed based on the preface to Skylitzes.

The Genesisios text pays particular attention to one character, Constantine the Armenian, despite his generally inconsequential role in events. The Chronicle of Symeon Logothete mentions that Constantine the Armenian was the father of Thomas Genesisios.¹² This connection has led some scholars to trust the marginal notation naming Genesisios as the author, and to think that the author had a familial connection to Constantine the Armenian, which would account for the particular attention given his career in the text.¹³ Some have suggested that a lost text recorded a biography of Constantine that was one of Genesisios’s sources.¹⁴ While studies

⁸ Karpozilos, *Vyzantinoi historikoi kai chronographoi*, 2: 317.

⁹ Kaldellis, *Ioseph Genesisios: On the Reigns of the Emperors*, xii–xiv.

¹⁰ Treadgold, *The Middle Byzantine Historians*, 180–81; Karpozilos, *Vyzantinoi historikoi kai chronographoi*, 2: 317–18.

¹¹ Featherstone and Codoñer, *Theophanis Continuati*, 14–15.

¹² Staffan Wahlgren, *Symeonis Magistri et Logothetae Chronicon* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2006), 131–46.

¹³ Hirsch thought the author was the son of Constantine: Ferdinand Ludwig Richard Hirsch, *Byzantinische Studien*, (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1876), 118. De Boor argued that he was a grandson: Carl de Boor, “Zu Genesisios,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 10 (1901): 62–65. Markopoulos and Kaldellis think the author was most likely a grandson: Athanasios Markopoulos, “Quelques remarques sur la famille des Génésioi aux IXe–Ce siècles,” *Zbornik Radova Vizantološkog Instituta* 24–25 (1986): 103–8; Athanasios Markopoulos, “Genesisios: A Study,” in *Realia Byzantina*, ed. Sofia Kotzabassi and Giannis Mavromatis, *Byzantisches Archiv* 22 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009), 138–40. Anthony Kaldellis, trans., *Ioseph Genesisios: On the Reigns of the Emperors*, xv–xxi. Treadgold, *The Middle Byzantine Historians*, 180–85.

¹⁴ Patricia Karlin-Hayter, “Études sur les deux histoires du règne de Michel III,” *Byzantion* 41 (1971): 452–96.

of the Genesisios family in the tenth century allow for a plausible identification of the author,¹⁵ some scholars have preferred to consider the text anonymous.¹⁶

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscript

There is one eleventh-century manuscript, *Codex Lipsiens Graecus 16*. On the manuscript see:

Lesmüller-Werner, Anni and Hans Thurn, eds., *Josephi Genesisii regum libri quattuor*, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 14. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1978; xxii–xxvi.

Wäschke, H. “Genesisios.” *Philologus* 37 (1878): 255–75.

Edition

Lesmüller-Werner, Anni and Hans Thurn, eds., *Josephi Genesisii regum libri quattuor*, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 14. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1978.

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¹⁵ Jean-Claude Cheynet, “Les Génésioi,” in *Myriobiblos: Essays on Byzantine Literature and Culture*, ed. Theodora Antonopoulou, Sofia Kotzabassi, and Marina Loukaki, Byzantinisches Archiv 29 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 71–84; Eleonora Kountoura-Galake, “The Origins of the Genesisios Family and Its Connections with the Armeniakon Theme,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 93, no. 2 (2000): 464–73; Markopoulos, “Quelques remarques.”

¹⁶ Alexander Kazhdan, “Iz Istorii Vizantiiskoi Khronographi X v. 3. Kniga Carei i Zizneopisanie Vasiliia,” *Vizantiiskii Vremennik* 21 (1962): 98; Alexander Kazhdan, *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); H. Wäschke, “Genesisios,” *Philologus* 37 (1878): 255–75; F. Štejnmann, “O ličnosti avtora ‘istorii carei’ Genesisii,” *Vizantiiskii Vremennik* 21 (1914): 15–44.

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Theophanes Continuatus

The text we call *Theophanes Continuatus* is a ninth-century anthology of three separate texts. The opening of the text explains that it is intended to be a continuation of the *Chronicle of Theophanes*, although it is not much like that text in structure, format, or style. It is known from a single early eleventh-century manuscript: *Vaticanus Graecus 167*.

The first part is called “Books I–IV” in older editions and “Text I” in the modern edition.¹ It is a narrative history describing the rules of Leo V (813–820), Michael II (820–829), Theophilus (829–842), and Michael III (842–867). The reign of each emperor is described in a separate book, so that history from 813 until 867 is described in four books.

The second part is called either Book V, or Text II, or the *Vita Basilii*, or the *Life of Basil*. It narrates the life of the Emperor Basil I (867–886), the founder of the Macedonian dynasty, in a highly favorable light, justifying his accession after the murder of Michael III.

The third part is called either Book VI, or Text III. It covers history from 886 until it breaks off suddenly during the reign of Romanos II while describing the re-conquest of Crete in 961. Although this text covers the reigns of multiple emperors, it is not divided into one book for each emperor.

Texts I and II appear to have been created under the patronage of Constantine Porphyrogenitos (945–959). Both of these texts are more classicizing in their Greek and make more use of rhetorical strategies, especially for praise and blame, than Theophanes and other ninth-century historical texts. These texts are the first surviving histories since Theophylakt

¹ Michael Featherstone and Juan Signes Codoñer, eds., *Chronographique Quae Theophanis Continuati Nomine Fertur Libri I-IV: Recensuerunt Anglice Verterunt Indicibus Instruxerunt Michael Featherstone et Juan Signes-Codoñer, Nuper Repertis Schedis Caroli de Boor Adiuuantibus*, *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* 53 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 3. Mango calls it TC in the introduction to Ihor Ševčenko, *Chronographiae Quae Theophanis Continuati Nomine Fertur Liber Quo Vita Basilii Imperatoris Amplectitur* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011).

Simokatta to use the classical model of history as a high-style, biographical narrative of great deeds.²

Text I / Books I–IV

This text is entitled “Chronicle Written by Order of Constantine, our Christ-loving Lord Born in the Purple, Son of Our most Wise Lord and Glorious Emperor Leo, Beginning Where the Blessed Theophanes of Sigriane, Related by Race to the Emperor, left off, that is from the Reign of Leo the Armenian; of Which this Same Emperor Constantine Laboriously Compiled and Adeptly Set Forth the Various Subjects in Detail for Clear Demonstration to Later Generations.”³ It has a preface in which the author addresses Emperor Constantine and describes the patronage of the history as one of the emperor’s good deeds and says that he merely assisted Constantine in the creation of the history.

Text I focuses mostly on the emperors’ military activities, internal palace politics, and religious policies. It criticizes the iconoclast policies of emperors Leo V, Michael II, and Theophilos. Michael III is characterized as an ineffective drunkard who is continuously under the influence of one of his ministers. Although Michael III presided over the restoration of icons and had religious policies that the author approved of, he receives this negative treatment because his poor moral standing was the justification for the murder which brought Basil I to power. The patronage of Basil’s grandson Constantine Porphyrogenitos ensured that the founder of his dynasty would be praised while the previous dynasty would be treated negatively.

Text II / Book V / Life of Basil

This text has a preface ostensibly written by Constantine VII himself, in which he claims authorship of the whole. The preface explains that he had planned to write a history of all of the Roman emperors, but due to pressures of time, he took the more modest task of writing the history of Basil I so that his great deeds could be a model of action for his

² Paul Magdalino, “Byzantine Historical Writing, 900–1400,” in *The Oxford History of Historical Writing*, ed. Sarah Foot, Chase F. Robinson, and Daniel R. Woolf (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 2: 227; Featherstone and Signes Codoñer, *Chronographique Quae Theophanis Continuati Nomine Fertur Libri I–IV*, 14.

³ Featherstone and Signes Codoñer, *Chronographique Quae Theophanis Continuati Nomine Fertur Libri I–IV*, 1.

descendants. The title of the work is “Historical Narrative of the Life and Deeds of Emperor Basil of Glorious Memory which his Grandson Constantine, By the Grace of God Emperor of the Romans, Assiduously Gathered from Various Accounts and Submitted to the Writer.”⁴

Constantine Porphyrogenitos himself used to be credited with authorship of a wide variety of texts, including Text II, but that position has been vigorously countered by Ševčenko.⁵ He is now seen as a patron who cultivated a circle of scholars who wrote anonymously for him. The other intellectual projects patronized by Constantine include handbooks on policy and proper imperial practices and the massive reworking of Roman history known to us as the Constantinian Excerpts.⁶

It has aptly been described as “a blatant piece of dynastic propaganda, which brazenly flouts the rules of historical objectivity and impartiality, and seems to draw on every literary genre other than historiography.”⁷ It has been seen as an example of the revival of ancient secular biography, and as drawing on elements of hagiography.⁸ It takes much from the genre of classical encomium,⁹ and plays with various classical¹⁰ and biblical models.¹¹ Both classical and biblical models are deployed to make Basil look like a great God-beloved ruler and Michael III like a craven sot who needed to be removed.

⁴ Ševčenko, *Chronographiae Quae Theophanis Continuati Nomine Fertur Liber Quo Vita Basilii Imperatoris Amplectitur*, 9.

⁵ Ihor Ševčenko, “Re-Reading Constantine Porphyrogenitus,” in *Byzantine Diplomacy: Papers from the Twenty-Fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Jonathan Shepard and Simon Franklin (Aldershot: Variorum, 1992), 167–95.

⁶ Johann Jacob Reiske, *De Cerimoniis Aulae Byzantinae: Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus* (Bonn: Weber, 1829); Michael McCormick, “Analyzing Imperial Ceremonies,” *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 35 (1985): 1–20; Agostino Pertusi, *De Thematibus* (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1952); Gyula Moravcsik, *De Administrando Imperio: Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1967).

⁷ Paul Magdalino, “Knowledge in Authority and Authorised History: The Imperial Intellectual Programme of Leo VI and Constantine VII,” in *Authority in Byzantium*, ed. Pamela Armstrong (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 200.

⁸ Paul J. Alexander, “Secular Biography at Byzantium,” *Speculum* 15, no. 2 (1940): 194–209; Andrea Luzzi, “Un esempio di uso strumentale dell’agiografia: La maxaira di S. Pietro e la dinastia Macedone,” *Rivista di studi bizantini e neoellenici* 31 (1994): 166–73.

⁹ Romilly Jenkins, “The Classical Background of the Scriptorum Post Theophanem,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 30, no. 8 (1954): 11–30.

¹⁰ Athanasios Markopoulos, “Kyrou Paideia kai Bios Basileiou. Enas pithanos syschetismos,” *Symmeikta* 15 (2002): 91–108; Athanasios Markopoulos, “The Emperor Basil I and Hippolytus: Legend and History,” in *History and Literature of Byzantium in the 9th–10th Centuries* (Aldershot: Variorum, 2004), xix.

¹¹ Athanasios Markopoulos, “Constantine the Great in Macedonian Historiography: Models and Approaches,” in *New Constantines: The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4th–13th Centuries*, ed. Paul Magdalino, Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies 13 (Aldershot: Variorum, 1994), 159–70.

Text III / Book VI

This text is in a simpler, less classicizing style than the previous books. This text itself seems to be a combination of two texts, one (Text IIIa) covering 886–948 and another (Text IIIb) covering 944–961. The section covering 886–948 appears to be more favorable to the family of Romanos Lakapenos, while the later section favors Constantine VII and his son.¹² IIIa seems to be a copy of Redaction B of the Chronicle of the Logothete. Text IIIb, with some changes, models Redaction A of the Chronicle of the Logothete.¹³

Authorship

The preface to Skylitzes's history mentions Theodore Daphnopates as an author of a history. Daphnopates is known from his letters to have been an intellectual of the mid-tenth century. Given that many of the classicizing histories only survive in a single manuscript, it is highly likely that Daphnopates's history did not survive. It is also possible that he wrote one of the anonymous histories that we do have. Kazhdan and Hunger think Daphnopates may have been the author of Text III.¹⁴ This is rejected by Markopoulos and the editors of Daphnopates's letters.¹⁵ Treadgold, by contrast, considers Daphnopates to have been the author of Text I and Text II, the *Life of Basil*.¹⁶ Most scholars consider the author of Text I and the ghost writer of Text II to be unknown. Ševčenko has identified the author of Text II with the anonymous author of the *De imagine Edessena*.¹⁷

¹² Featherstone and Signes Codoñer, *Chronographique Quae Theophanis Continuati Nomine Fertur Libri I-IV*, 3–4; Alexander Kazhdan, "O sostave tak nazyvaemoi 'Khroniki prodolzatelei Feofana'," *Vizantiiskii Vremennik* 19 (1961): 76–96.

¹³ Staffan Wahlgren, *Symeonis Magistri et Logothetae Chronicon*, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 44 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2006), 45.

¹⁴ Alexander Kazhdan, "Iz Istorii Vizantiiskoi Khronografii X v. 1. O Sostave Tak Nazyvaemoi 'Khroniki Prodolz'atelii Feofana,'" *Vizantiiskii Vremennik* 19 (1961): 76–96; Herbert Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner: Philosophie, Rhetorik, Epistolographie, Geschichtsschreibung*, *Geographie*, vol. 1, *Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft*, 12.5 (Munich: Beck, 1978), 1:343.

¹⁵ Athanasios Markopoulos, "Théodore Daphnopatès et la Continuation de Théophane," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 35 (1985): 171–82; Jean Darrouzès and Leendert Gerrit Westerink, eds., *Théodore Daphnopatès: Correspondance*, *Le monde Byzantin* (Paris: Éditions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1978).

¹⁶ Warren T. Treadgold, *The Middle Byzantine Historians* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 176–80, 190.

¹⁷ Ševčenko, *Chronographiae Quae Theophanis Continuati Nomine Fertur Liber Quo Vita Basilii Imperatoris Amplectitur*, 483–84; Cyril Mango, "Introduction," in *Chronographiae Quae Theophanis Continuati Nomine Fertur Liber Quo Vita Basilii Imperatoris Amplectitur*, ed. Ševčenko, *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* 42, 13.

Featherstone and Codoñer see the other two Constantinopolitan writers mentioned by Skylitzes, Joseph and Manuel, as possible options for the author of Text I, but nothing further is known of either of them.¹⁸ They further suggest that the author of Text I may have been involved in the work on the *Constantinian Excerpts* because the author included verbatim quotations from several ancient Greek historians.

Featherstone and Codoñer suggest on various grounds that Basil the Nothos, the illegitimate son of Romanos Lakepenos, was responsible for compiling the three texts into one whole while he was serving Nikephoros II Phokas as *parakoimonenos* (963–969).¹⁹

Relationship to Genesisos

Most of the information found in Books I–IV and the *Life of Basil* can also be found in the history known as Genesisos. This leads scholars to speculate that the author of Books I–IV and the author of the *Life of Basil* used a source that was also used by Genesisos. Detailed study has shown that they did not copy directly from Genesisos and Genesisos did not copy directly from them, rather all used a common source that seems more likely to have been a dossier of texts with information relevant for history rather than one set text.²⁰ Treadgold diverges from this consensus in believing that the common source was a (no longer extant) text he calls the *Secret History* of Niketas David the Paphlagonian.²¹ Niketas David is known as the author of the *Vita Ignatii*, the life of Patriarch Ignatios, and

¹⁸ Featherstone and Signes Codoñer, *Chronographique Quae Theophanis Continuati Nomine Fertur Libri I–IV*, 14–15. While most scholars see Skylitzes as referring to “Joseph Genesisos and Manuel” they point out that Skylitzes always uses an article before surnames and so interpret this as three first-names: Joseph, Genesisos, and Manuel.

¹⁹ Michael Featherstone, “Basileios Nothos as Compiler: The De Cerimoniis and Theophanes Continuatus,” in *Textual Transmission in Byzantium: Between Textual Criticism and Quellenforschung*, ed. Inmaculada Pérez Martín and Juan Signes Codoñer (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 353–72; Michael Featherstone, “Theophanes Continuatus VI and De Cerimoniis I, 96,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 104, no. 1 (2011): 115–23; Featherstone and Signes Codoñer, *Chronographique Quae Theophanis Continuati Nomine Fertur Libri I–IV*, 16–19.

²⁰ Featherstone and Signes Codoñer, *Chronographique Quae Theophanis Continuati Nomine Fertur Libri I–IV*, 11–13; Juan Signes Codoñer, *El periodo del segundo iconoclasmo en Theophanes Continuatus: análisis y comentario de los tres primeros libros de la crónica* (Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1995); Jakov Ljubarskij, “Theophanes Continuatus und Genesisos: Das Problem einer gemeinsamen Quelle,” *Byzantinoslavica* 48, no. 1 (1987): 12–27; Magdalino, “Knowledge in Authority and Authorised History: The Imperial Intellectual Programme of Leo VI and Constantine VII,” 201–2.

²¹ Treadgold, *The Middle Byzantine Historians*, 134–52.

some scholars attribute to him a lost ecclesiastical history,²² but the further attribution of a secular history is an innovation.

The preface to the *Genesis* text says that it was written on commission from Constantine VII. Most scholars now think that Constantine first gave the dossier of sources to the author of *Genesis*, but was dissatisfied with the resulting history. Constantine then gave the same dossier to the author of Text I, who created a history even more favorable to Constantine's family and written in a better style.

Date of Composition

Texts I and II were produced during the sole reign of Constantine VII from 944–959. Mango and Treadgold see the *Life of Basil* as written first, followed by *Genesis*, followed by Text I.²³ Text III was written sometime after 961 and likely before the death of Nikephoros II Phokas in 969.

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

Theophanes Continuatus is known solely through one early eleventh-century manuscript, *Vaticanus Graecus 167*.²⁴ A sixteenth-century manuscript was copied directly from *Vaticanus Graecus 167*. Sections of Skylitzes's history copied from *Theophanes Continuatus* indicate that he had a better manuscript to work from than *Vaticanus Graecus 167*, and the text has been amended through comparison with Skylitzes.²⁵

²² Symeon Paschalides, "From Hagiography to Historiography: The Case of the Vita Ignatii (BHG 817) by Nicetas David the Paphlagonian," in *Les vies des saints à Byzance: genre littéraire ou biographie historique?*, ed. Paolo Odorico and Panagiotis A. Agapitos, *Dossiers Byzantins* 4 (Paris: Centre d'études byzantines, néo-helléniques et sud-est européennes, École des hautes études en sciences sociales 2004), 161–73; Magdalino, "Knowledge in Authority and Authorised History: The Imperial Intellectual Programme of Leo VI and Constantine VII," 198.

²³ Mango, "Introduction," 5–10; Treadgold, *The Middle Byzantine Historians*, 188–96.

²⁴ Ševčenko, *Chronographiae Quae Theophanis Continuati Nomine Fertur Liber Quo Vita Basilii Imperatoris Amplectitur*, 14–30; Featherstone and Signes Codoñer, *Chronographique Quae Theophanis Continuati Nomine Fertur Libri I–IV*, 5–9.

²⁵ Featherstone, "Theophanes Continuatus VI and De Cerimoniis I, 96," 20–22.

Editions

TEXT I

Featherstone, Michael and Juan Signes Codoñer, eds., *Chronographiae Quae Theophanis Continuati Nomine Fertur Libri I–IV: Recensuerunt Anglice Verterunt Indicibus Instruxerunt Michael Featherstone et Juan Signes-Codoñer, Nuper Repertis Schedis Caroli de Boor Adiuuantibus*. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 53. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015.

TEXT II

Ševčenko, Ihor. *Chronographiae Quae Theophanis Continuati Nomine Fertur Liber Quo Vita Basilii Imperatoris Amplectitur*. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 42. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011.

TEXT III AWAITS A MODERN EDITION

Publication History

The *Life of Basil* was first published by Leo Allatius in 1653. The entirety – Texts I, II, and III – was published in the Paris Corpus in 1685 by François Combefis. The title *Theophanes Continuatus* and the division into six books were originated by Immanuel Bekker for the Bonn Corpus.²⁶

*Translations**English*

TEXT I

Featherstone, Michael and Juan Signes Codoñer, eds. *Chronographiae Quae Theophanis Continuati Nomine Fertur Libri I–IV: Recensuerunt Anglice Verterunt Indicibus Instruxerunt Michael Featherstone et Juan Signes-Codoñer, Nuper Repertis Schedis Caroli de Boor Adiuuantibus*. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 53. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015.

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²⁶ Bekker, Immanuel ed., *Theophanes continuatus; Ioannes Cameniata; Symeon Magister; Georgius monachus*, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 33 (Bonn: Weber, 1838).

German (of Text II)

Breyer, Leopold, trans. *Vom Bauernhof auf den Kaiserthron: Leben des Kaisers Basileios I., des Begründers der Makedonischen Dynastie*. Byzantinische Geschichtsschreiber 14. Graz: Styria, 1964.

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Constantinian Excerpts

The name *Constantinian Excerpts* refers to an assemblage of the works of ancient and early medieval historians commissioned by Constantine VII Porphyrogenitos (945–959).¹ Originally arranged into fifty-three volumes on a number of topics, now only “On Embassies” exists in its entirety, along with parts of “On Virtues and Vices,” “On Ambushes,” and “On Gnostic Statements.” These are often known by their modern Latin titles: *de legationibus*, *de virtutibus et vitiis*, *de insidiis*, and *de sententiis*. Each extant volume includes the same preface, the text of which explains that the project was intended to make the vast amount of historical knowledge more intelligible and accessible.²

The point of the project apparently was not to excerpt the useful information from longer histories, but rather to rearrange *all* of those histories by topic. Because history was thought to be useful to emperors due to the lessons it could teach, Constantine’s project reorganized history by problem or lesson rather than by chronology. The compilers organized the material by topic, so that if an emperor was concerned with an upcoming embassy, for example, he could read all the examples of embassies in Roman history at one time, rather than examining the histories in chronological order. The preface explicitly rejected summarizing events in favor of keeping the literary expression of the original texts. It also explains that “nothing contained in the texts would escape this distribution into subjects; by this division according to the content nothing of the continuous narration is

¹ Bernard Flusin, “Les Excerpta constantiniens Logique d’une anti-histoire,” in *Fragments d’historiens grecs. Autour de Denys d’Halicarnasse*, ed. Sylvie Pittia (Rome: École française de Rome, 2002), 537–39.

² Paul Lemerle, *Byzantine Humanism: The First Phase: Notes and Remarks on Education and Culture in Byzantium from Its Origins to the 10th Century*. Translated by Helen Lindsay and Ann Moffatt. (Canberra: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1986), 323–32.

omitted, but rather it is preserved entire.”³ The project was part of a cultural trend in the tenth century toward the collection and arrangement of ancient knowledge.⁴

The project was initiated under the sponsorship of Constantine VII (945–959) but may have been completed in the decades after his death.⁵ Twenty-six histories written in Greek between the fifth century BCE and the ninth century CE are included in our remaining sample.⁶ The original may have represented more texts. Many fragments of ancient histories are available only in the remaining *Constantinian Excerpts*, most notably much of Polybios.

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

The collection “On Virtue and Vice” survives in the large and luxurious *Codex Peirescianus*, which appears to have been one of the original tenth-century volumes. “On Gnomonic Statements” survives as a palimpsest in *Vaticanus Graecus 73*. The reused leaves match the size and material of those in the *Codex Peirescianus*, indicating that it also had been one of the same set. A codex in the Escorial Library that burned in 1671 contained the collections on embassies, and was likely another of the original tenth-century set.⁷ It was copied into several sixteenth-century manuscripts.⁸ The passages of the collection “On Ambushes” were copied in the sixteenth

³ András Németh, “The Imperial Systematisation of the Past in Constantinople: Constantine VII and His Historical Excerpts,” in *Encyclopaedism from Antiquity to the Renaissance*, ed. Greg Woolf and Jason König (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 238.

⁴ Aude Cohen-Skalli, “Les ‘Excerpta Constantiniana’: une συλλογή conçue d’après un modèle juridique,” *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 63 (2013): 33–52; Paul Magdalino, “Orthodoxy and History in Tenth-Century Byzantine ‘encyclopedism,’” in *Encyclopedic Trends in Byzantium?*, ed. Peter van Deun and Caroline Macé. *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 212. (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters en Departement Oosterse Studies, 2011), 143–59; Paolo Odorico, “La cultura della Συλλογή. 1) Il cosiddetto enciclopedismo bizantino. 2) Le tavole del sapere di Giovanni Damasceno,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 83, no. 1 (1990): 1–21; Catherine Holmes, “Byzantine Political Culture and Compilation Literature in the Tenth and Eleventh Century,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 64 (2010): 55–80.

⁵ Németh, “The Imperial Systematisation of the Past in Constantinople: Constantine VII and His Historical Excerpts,” 243–45.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 232.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 242.

⁸ András Németh, “Imperial Systematization of the Past: Emperor Constantine VII and His Historical Excerpts” (PhD diss., Central European University, 2010), 140.

century into *Escorial* Ω.I.11 and into *Parisinus Graecus 1666*.⁹ On the manuscript tradition see: András Németh, “Imperial Systematization of the Past: Emperor Constantine VII and His Historical Excerpts.” PhD diss., Central European University, 2010, 93–178 and 335–337.

Edition

Boissevain, Ursulus, Carl de Boor, and Theodor Büttner-Wobst, eds. *Excerpta historica iussu Imp. Constantini Porphyrogeniti confecta*. 5 vols. Berlin: Weidmann, 1903.

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⁹ *Ibid.*, 142.

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John Kaminiates

The Capture of Thessaloniki is a text describing the sack of Thessaloniki by Leo of Tripoli in 904, surviving in one manuscript of the fifteenth century and several later ones. The text takes the form of a long letter ostensibly written by John Kaminiates to his friend, Gregory of Cappadocia, who asked for an account of the conquest of Thessaloniki and the subsequent treatment of the captives. John Kaminiates identifies himself as a priest of the imperial palace at Thessaloniki, holding the ecclesiastical dignity of *kouboukleisios*.¹ He describes his father as an *exarch* of Greece.²

The text does not conform to many of the conventions of Byzantine historical writing. It is framed, in its opening and closing, as a letter responding to a friend's request for information. Within the letter's frame, the text includes an encomium to Thessaloniki, a lament on the sins of citizens that provoked misfortune, and first-person descriptions of the attack on the city, the enslavement of much of the population, the travails of the prisoners on the voyage to Crete, and their subsequent dispersal. In narrating personal experiences of deep horror, the text does not conform to the dispassionate narration normal for classicizing history.

Alexander Kazhdan argued, largely on the basis of perceived anachronisms, that the text was a fifteenth-century composition masquerading as a tenth-century text, written in response to the Ottoman siege of Thessaloniki in 1430, and questioned the historicity of Leo of Tripoli's attack.³ Other scholars think that the extant text is a reworked or modified version of a tenth-century original.⁴ Ioannis Tsaras argued for a tenth-century time

¹ Alexander Kazhdan, "Some Questions Addressed to the Scholars Who Believe in the Authenticity of Kaminiates' 'Capture of Thessalonica,'" *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 71 (1978): 301.

² *Ibid.*, 303; Paolo Odorico, ed., *Thessalonique: Chroniques d'une ville prise* (Toulouse: Anacharsis, 2005), 12.

³ Kazhdan, "Some Questions," 313.

⁴ Angelike Konstantakopoulou suggests that the geographic description of Thessaloniki may be a renaissance addition to a tenth-century text. Angelike Konstantakopoulou, *Vyzantinē Thessalonikē: Chōros kai ideologia*, (Ioannina: University of Ioannina, 1996), 70–90. Vassilios

of composition.⁵ David Frendo set the text in a tenth-century religious and literary milieu and undercut a number of Kazhdan's arguments from anachronism.⁶ Paolo Odorico offers additional arguments for accepting a tenth century date, pointing out the lack of sufficient motivation for a forgery, and explaining how Kaminates's text fits within tenth-century culture and politics.⁷

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

Four manuscripts of *The Capture of Thessaloniki* have survived. *Vaticanus Graecus 172*, finished in 1439, *Barberinianus Graecus 241* (sixteenth century), and *Athous ex Laura L 55* (ca. 1511) are complete. *Parisinus Graecus 1031* (sixteenth century) only contains the first part of the text.⁸ *Vaticanus Graecus 172* contains texts about the history of Thessaloniki, including Anagnostes's account of the Ottoman siege.⁹

Edition

Böhlig, Gertrud, ed. *Ioannis Caminiatae De expugnatione Thessalonicae*. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 4. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1973.

Publication History

Leo Allatius completed an edition with a Latin translation in 1653. It was edited by François Combefis for the Paris Corpus in 1685, and reprinted in Venice in 1729.¹⁰ Immanuel Bekker edited it for the Bonn Corpus in

Christides suggests that an account written in the tenth century could have been re-written later to achieve the goals suggested by Kazhdan. Vassilios Christides, "Once Again Caminiates' 'Capture of Thessaloniki,'" *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 74, no. 1 (1981): 9–10.

⁵ Giannes Tsaras, "Ἐ Authentikotēta tou Chronikou tou Iōannou Kamiatē," *Vyzantiaka* 8 (1988): 41–58.

⁶ Joseph Frendo, "The Miracles of St. Demetrius and the Capture of Thessaloniki," *Byzantinoslavica* 58 (1997): 205–24.

⁷ Odorico, *Thessalonique*, 16–24.

⁸ Gertrud Böhlig, ed., *Ioannis Caminiatae De expugnatione Thessalonicae*, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 4 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1973).

⁹ Odorico, *Thessalonique*, 17.

¹⁰ Francis Combefis, ed., *Historia Byzantinae scriptores post Theophanem, partim nunc primum editi, partim recensiti, et nova versione adornati, quorum catalogum proxima pagina indicabit*. (Paris: Ex Typographia Regia, 1685).

1838, with Combefis's Latin translation.¹¹ Combefis's edition and translation were published in the *Patrologia Graeca*.¹²

Translations

English

Frendo, David and Athanasios Fotiou, trans. *John Kaminiates: The Capture of Thessaloniki*. Byzantina Australiensia 12. Perth: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 2000.

French

Odorico, Paolo, trans. *Thessalonique: Chroniques d'une ville prise*. Toulouse: Anacharsis, 2005.

German

Böhlig, Gertrud, trans. *Die Einnahme Thessalonikis durch die Araber im Jahre 904*. Graz: Styria, 1975.

Greek

Odorico, Paolo. *Chronika tōn alōseōn tēs Thessalonikēs*. Translated by Charis Messis. Athens: Ekdoseis Agra, 2010.

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¹¹ Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Theophanes continuatus: Ioannes Cameniata, Symeon Magister, Georgius monachus*, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 33 (Bonn: Weber, 1838).

¹² Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, vol. 109 (Paris: Apud J-P. Migne, 1863).

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- Tsolakēs, Eudoxos and Vasilikē Kouphopoulou. *Iōannou Kaminiatou eis tēn halōsin tēs Thessalonikēs, Pinakas lexēōn*. Vol. 24. Vyzantina Keimena kai Meletai 24. Thessaloniki: Kentro Vyzantinōn Ereunōn, 1992.
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Symeon the Logothete

A large number of manuscripts contain versions and portions of a chronicle from Creation to 948, and to 963 in some cases. Some manuscripts name Symeon *magistros* and *logothete* as the author, and that name has become associated with the entire corpus. Medieval users of the text seem to have made less of the distinction between author and copyist than has often been assumed by scholars in the past several centuries. The freedom with which medieval writers modified and adapted the chronicle as they copied it has led to a situation where one “might be tempted to dispense with a critical edition in favor of editing each manuscript separately.”¹ Yet there are enough commonalities among versions to recognize two main versions: **Redaction A** and **Redaction B**.

Contents

Redaction A begins with Creation and ends in 948. It is favorable to Romanos I Lakapenos. The early sections draw on large amounts of information from George the Monk and Theophanes. It is often understood to have three parts: a summary of history from Creation to Justinian II, a continuation of this chronicle up to 843, and a section from 843–948 that most likely represents the work newly written (rather than edited) by the author.² The questions of who put this version of history up to 843 together, from what sources, and when, remain unanswered.

Kazhdan has argued that the 843–948 section should be divided into a further three sections: 842–886 (Michael III and Basil I), 886–913 (Leo VI

¹ Staffan Wahlgren, *Symeonis Magistri et Logothetae Chronicon*, *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* 44 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2006), v; Staffan Wahlgren, “New Philology and the Chronicle of Symeon the Logothete,” in *Doron Rodopikilon: Studies in Honour of Jan Olof Rosenqvist*, ed. Denis Michael Searby, Ewa Balicka-Witakowska, and Johan Heldt, *Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. Studia Byzantina Upsaliensia* 12 (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet, 2012), 221–26.

² Wahlgren, *Symeonis*, 5.

and Alexander), and 913–948. The section covering 886–913, he suggests, was based on a text providing information about events in Constantinople, the “annals of Constantinople,” while the section covering 913–948 was based on the author’s personal memory and research.³ Wahlgren considers this interpretation to be highly speculative.⁴

The narrative is organized around the reigns of rulers, beginning with Adam, who Wahlgren considers to have been “treated as a kind of proto-Byzantine emperor.”⁵ Each ruler’s reign is discussed in a separate chapter, from Adam to Romanos Lakapenos. After biblical patriarchs, Assyrian, Persian, and Ptolemaic rulers carry the chain forward to the foundation of the Roman Empire.

The narrative ends in 948 and the date of our earliest datable manuscript is 1013. We know little about how or when the text was put together. A reference in the text indicates that it was compiled after the death of Constantine VII in 959. Wahlgren sets the date of composition, very tentatively, between 959 and some point in the reign of Nikephoros II (963–969). He wonders why a chronicle written after the death of Constantine VII (959) would end with the death of Romanos in 948, when normally chronicles are assumed to continue to the author’s present, or to the death of the last emperor. The simplest explanation would be that the chronicle originally was written shortly after 948 and that all references to later events are interpolations, but in the details this explanation is problematic. Also, why would anyone write so as to portray Romanos I as a hero after his deposition in 948, as this text does? Deeper studies of Byzantine ideology and literature are needed to resolve the questions raised by the portrayal of Romanos. The text has no preface, and perhaps was not completed.⁶

Redaction B ends in 963 and describes favorably the early career of Nikephoros II Phokas before he became emperor. Markopoulos argues that this redaction was created during the reign of Nikephoros II, 963–969.⁷

³ Alexander Kazhdan, “Khronika Simeona Logofeta,” *Vizantiiskii Vremennik* 15 (1959): 125–43; Alexander Kazhdan, “Symeon Logothete,” in *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. Alexander Kazhdan and Alice Mary Talbot (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991): 1982–1983.

⁴ Wahlgren, *Symeonis*, 5.

⁵ Staffan Wahlgren, “Past and Present in Mid-Byzantine Chronicles: Change in Narrative Technique and the Transmission of Knowledge,” in *Past and Present in Medieval Chronicles*, ed. Mari Isoaho, Collegium: Studies across Disciplines in the Humanities and Social Sciences 17 (Helsinki: Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies, 2015), 37.

⁶ Wahlgren, *Symeonis*, 5–8.

⁷ Athanasios Markopoulos, “Le témoignage du Vaticanus gr. 163 pour la période entre 945–963,” *Vyzantina Symmeikta* 3 (1979): 83–119.

Istrin published it as a continuation of George the Monk.⁸ It is not immediately recognizable as an improvement on the text of Redaction A.⁹

Redaction B includes a description of Nikephoros Phokas's conquest of Crete in 961 that is modeled on Procopios's account of the conquest of North Africa by Belisarios in 533–534. As well as parallels in the structure of the story, the chronicle mimics the phrasing and word choice of Procopios's text.¹⁰

Authorship

Enough manuscripts list either Symeon or Symeon *logothete* and *magistros* as the author of the text that it is reasonably certain that contemporaries associated a Symeon with those titles with the writing of the text.¹¹ The author may be the same person as the Symeon who was promoted to *logothetes* and *magistros* by Nikephoros Phokas (963–969) and to *logothetes* of the *dromos* by Tzimiskes (969–976). This combination of name and titles suggests that the author may have been the same person as Symeon Metaphrastes, who undertook a systematic re-writing of medieval hagiography into high-style Greek in the later tenth century. The identification of the chronicler with the hagiographer is accepted by some scholars¹² and disputed by others.¹³ A great many texts of the tenth century are attributed to Symeon, and it is plausible that the name simply became associated with good scholarship and placed on texts to enhance their authority.

Treadgold believes that Symeon wrote Redaction A in 967 and Redaction B in 968.¹⁴ Wahlgren considers this position untenable on the grounds that

⁸ Vasili Mikhailovich Istrin, ed., *Knigy vremen' naia i obraznia Geōrgiia mnikha: khronika Georgiia Amartola v drevnem slavianorusskom perevodie: Tekst, izsledovanie i slovar'* (Petrograd: Otd-niia Russkago iazyka i slovesnosti RosAkademii nauk, 1922).

⁹ Staffan Wahlgren, "Review of Warren Treadgold, *The Middle Byzantine Historians*," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 108, no. 1 (2015): 269.

¹⁰ Anthony Kaldellis, "The Byzantine Conquest of Crete (961 AD), Prokopios' 'Vandal War', and the Continuator of the 'Chronicle' of Symeon," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 39, no. 2 (2015): 302–11.

¹¹ Wahlgren, *Symeonis*, 112.

¹² Alexandra Sotiroudis, *Die handschriftliche Überlieferung des "Georgius continuatus" (Redaktion A)* (Thessaloniki: Aristoteleio Panepistémio Thessalonikes, 1989); Athanasios Markopoulos, "Ἐ chronographia tou Pseudosymeōn kai oi pēges tēs" (Panepistēmion Iōanninōn, 1978); Warren T. Treadgold, *The Middle Byzantine Historians* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 203–17.

¹³ Kazhdan, "Symeon Logothete"; Nancy Patterson Ševčenko, "Symeon Metaphrastes," *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, ed. Alexander Kazhdan and Alice-Mary Talbot (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991): 1983–1984; Wahlgren, *Symeonis*, 3–4.

¹⁴ Treadgold, *The Middle Byzantine Historians*, 203–17.

one author would not write two versions of the same text in such a short time span, the second of which does not improve upon the first.¹⁵

Related Texts

Pseudo-Symeon – This text is in *Parisinus Graecus 1712*. It begins with Creation and ends with the year 963. The fundamental study of the text has been completed by Markopoulos.¹⁶ It is a major source for the history of George Kedrenos.¹⁷ Pseudo-Symeon has not yet been published completely, but the portion covering 318 to 963 is published, under the title “Symeon Magister,” in Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Theophanes continuatus, Ioannes Cameniata, Symeon Magister [i.e. Pseudo-Symeon], Georgius Monachus*, *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae* 33 (Bonn: Weber, 1838) 603–760.

Book VI / Text III of *Theophanes Continuatus* – This text covers history from 886–963 and seems to be based on the Chronicle of Symeon. It appears to be a combination of two texts, one (Text IIIa) covering 886–948 and another (Text IIIb) covering 944–963. Text IIIa appears to be more favorable to the family of Romanos Lakapenos, while Text IIIb favors Constantine VII and his son.¹⁸ IIIa seems to be a copy of Redaction B of the Logothete Chronicle. Text IIIb, with some changes, models Redaction A of the Logothete Chronicle.¹⁹

Chronicon Ambrosianum – Named after its best manuscript, the tenth- or eleventh-century *Ambrosianus Graecus D34*, this text is also sometimes called the *Chronicle of Pseudo-Polydeukes*. This is not a version of the Symeon chronicle but a parallel text. This text largely covers the same

¹⁵ Wahlgren, “Review of Warren Treadgold, *The Middle Byzantine Historians*,” 269.

¹⁶ Markopoulos, “Ἐ χρονογραφία τοῦ Πσεῦδοςυμεῶν καὶ οἱ πῆγες τῆς.”

¹⁷ Apostolos D. Karpozilos, *Vyzantinoi historikoi kai chronographoi*, vol. 3 (Athens: Kanakē, 2009), 331–40; Kurt Schweinburg, “Die ursprüngliche Form der Kedrenchronik,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 30 (1929): 68–77; Herbert Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner* (Munich: Beck, 1978), 393.

¹⁸ Michael Featherstone and Juan Signes Codoñer, eds., *Chronographique Quae Theophanis Continuati Nomine Fertur Libri I–IV: Recensuerunt Anglice Verterunt Indicibus Instruxerunt Michael Featherstone et Juan Signes-Codoñer, Nuper Repertis Schedis Caroli de Boor Adiuuantibus*, *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* 53 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 3–4; Alexander Kazhdan, “O sostave tak nazyvaemoi ‘Khroniki prodolzatelei Feofana,’” *Vizantiiskii Vremennik* 19 (1961): 76–96.

¹⁹ Wahlgren, *Symeonis*, 45.

material as Redaction A up to Julius Caesar, and thereafter narrates mostly ecclesiastical history.²⁰

Alternate Names

Continuation of George the Monk – A portion of Redaction B covering 842–948 is appended to the end of the text of George the Monk in some manuscripts, and hence called a continuation of George.

Theodosius of Melitene – Redaction A was published under the name of Theodosius Melitene by Tafel: Gottlieb Lukas Friedrich Tafel, ed. *Theodosii Meliteni qui fertur Chronographia. Ex codice graeco Regiae bibliothecae monacensis*. Munich: G. Franz, 1859.

Leo Grammaticus – Redaction A was published under the name Leo Grammaticus in Bekker, Immanuel ed. *Leonis Grammatici Chronographia, Eustathii de Capta Thessalonica*. Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 46. Bonn: Weber, 1842.

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

By Wahlgren's count there are twenty-nine Greek manuscripts of Redaction A, two manuscripts of different Slavonic translations of Redaction A, eight manuscripts of Redaction B, two manuscripts of Pseudo-Symeon, and eleven of the *Chronicon Ambrosianum*.²¹ The history of the publication of various versions, each based on a small selection of manuscripts, defies summary; please see the detailed exposition in Wahlgren.²²

Editions

Redaction A has been edited: Staffan Wahlgren, *Symeonis Magistri et Logothetae Chronicon*, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 44 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2006).

²⁰ Ibid., 119; Staffan Wahlgren, "Original und Archetypus: zu Zustandekommen und Transformation einer byzantinischen Weltchronik (Pseudo-Polydeukes/Symeon Logothetes)," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 96, no. 1 (2003): 269–77.

²¹ Wahlgren, *Symeonis*, 27–117; Wahlgren, "New Philology and the Chronicle of Symeon the Logothete." Filippo Ronconi, "Juxtaposition / Assemblage de textes et histoire de la tradition: Le cas du Par. Gr. 1711," in *The Legacy of Bernard de Montfaucon: Three Hundred Years of Studies on Greek Handwriting: Proceedings of the Seventh International Colloquium of Greek Paleography*, ed. Antonio Bravo García and Immaculada Pérez Martín (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 503–20.

²² Wahlgren, *Symeonis*, 132–34.

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Staffan Wahlgren is preparing an English translation for the Liverpool Byzantine Texts in Translation series.

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Leo the Deacon

The history of Leo the Deacon is a classicizing history covering the period 959–986. The text survives only in *Parisinus Graecus 1712*. It was written in the late tenth century; either after 989 or after 995,¹ and most likely before 1000. It is organized into ten books. It begins in the reign of Romanos II, focusing on Nikephoros II Phokas's conquest of Crete and following Nikephoros's military career in detail. The murder of Nikephoros by John I Tzimiskes is narrated in affecting style at the end of book five. The second half of the history focuses on John's military career and ends with John's death by poison in 976.

In the prologue, the author describes himself as Leo, the son of Basil, born in the village of Kaloë in western Anatolia. Elsewhere in the text he mentions that he pursued higher education in Constantinople and was ordained a deacon. He appears to have participated in the Bulgarian campaign of 986 and witnessed the Byzantine defeat in the battle of Trajan's Gate. There are no suggestions in the history that Leo lived beyond 1000.² Leo also wrote an encomium to Emperor Basil.³

Leo's history is noted for its revival of classical forms of history writing.⁴ He includes ostensibly verbatim speeches, digressions on natural

¹ Leo mentions that an earthquake in 989 damaged the Hagia Sophia and that it took six years for the repairs to be completed; if true, this chronology would have the last attested event in the history occur in 995. Siuziumov believes, however, that the phrase about repairs is a later insertion and supports a *terminus post quem* of 989. Mikhail Iakovlevich Siuziumov, "Ob istochnikakh L'va D'iakona i Skilitsy," *Vizantiiskoe obozrenie* 2 (1916): 106–66 at 137–39.

² Panagiotakes suggests instead that Leo should be associated with Leo Asianos, or Asinos, who is mentioned as a historian in Skylitzes's prologue and named Metropolitan of Caria by Kedrenos. This association would have Leo live well into the eleventh century. Nikolaos Panagiotakēs, ed., *Leōn o Diakonos* (Athens, 1965), 16–29.

³ Published in I. Sykoutres, "Leontos tou Diakonou anekdoton egkōmion eis Basileion tōn B'," *Epeteris Ètaireias Vyzantinon Spoudōn* 10 (1933): 425–34.

⁴ Michael Angold and Michael Whitby, "Historiography," in *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys, John Haldon, and Robin Cormack (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 843.

phenomena, and occasionally marks time with references to the seasons. His level of detail in descriptions of military engagements is also reminiscent of some classical histories. In using the lives of the emperors Nikephoros II and John I as the primary structure, the history participates in the middle-Byzantine trend toward organizing history around imperial biographies.⁵

Because Nikephoros II Phokas is the hero of the first half of the book and John I Tzimiskes is the hero of the second half, scholars have postulated that Leo used sources written from different viewpoints. Kazhdan has argued that Leo used a pro-Phokas source along with another source opposed to Constantine VII and Nikephoros II.⁶

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

Leo's history survives in one manuscript, *Parisinus Graecus 1712*, dated by scholars to the twelfth century. The manuscript also contains the Chronicle of Pseudo-Symeon and the *Chronographia* of Michael Psellos.

Edition

A new edition is being prepared for *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* by Athanasios Markopoulos.

Publication History

François Combefis's work on publishing the text was cut short by his death in 1679.⁷ His partial edition was published posthumously in 1685.⁸ Charles

⁵ Athanasios Markopoulos, "From Narrative Historiography to Historical Biography. New Trends in Byzantine Historical Writing in the 10th-11th Centuries," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 102, no. 2 (2010): 697–715.

⁶ Alexander Kazhdan, "Iz istorii vizantiiskoi khronografii X v. Istochniki L'va D'iakona i Skititsy dlia istorii tretei chetverti X stoletia," *Vizantiiskii Vremennik* 20 (1961): 106–28; Siuziumov, "Ob istochnikakh L'va D'iakona i Skititsy," 106–66.

⁷ Alice-Mary Talbot and Denis Sullivan, eds., *The History of Leo the Deacon: Byzantine Military Expansion in the Tenth Century* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2005), 51.

⁸ François Combefis, ed., *Historiae Byzantinae scriptores post Theophanem* (Paris: Typographia Regia, 1685).

Hase published a complete edition in 1819.⁹ This was reprinted in the Bonn Corpus and the *Patrologia Graeca*.¹⁰

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⁹ Charles Benoît Hase, ed., *Leonis Diaconi Caloënsis historia, scriptoresque alii ad res Byzantinas pertinentes* (Paris: Ex Typographia Regia, 1819).

¹⁰ Charles Benoît Hase, ed., *Leonis diaconi Caloënsis Historiae libri x*, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 5 (Bonn: Weber, 1828); Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, vol. 117 (Paris: Apud J-P. Migne, 1864).

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Chronicle of Monemvasia

This three-page text is “one of the most controversial sources for the history of the Slavs in Greece.”¹ It is a compilation of texts about Avars and the bishopric of Patras, rather than a chronicle. Because it describes the removal of the Greek population of the Peloponnese, it has played a contentious role in debates over the Slavic settlement of Greece in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In 1836, Jakob Fallmerayer used the text to argue that the modern inhabitants of Greece descend from Slavs rather than ancient Greeks, with overt prejudicial and political implications.² Fallmerayer’s thesis sparked a vigorous response from Greek nationalist historians and interpretations of the *Chronicle of Monemvasia* continued to be highly politicized.³ Furor has faded as the integration of archaeology into our understanding of history, and the evolution of views on how ethnic communities are constructed, has changed how historians approach the evidence of such brief medieval texts.⁴

The text was found in four manuscripts: *Iviron 329* (sixteenth century), *Kutlumus 220* (fifteenth or sixteenth century), *Taurinensis 336* (sixteenth century), and *Collegio Greco 12* (thirteenth/fifteenth–sixteenth centuries).⁵ *Taurinensis 336* was destroyed by fire in 1904, but is known through editions by Pasini and Bees.⁶ The *Kutlumus* and *Taurinensis* manuscripts contain

¹ Florin Curta, “Barbarians in Dark-Age Greece: Slavs or Avars?,” in *Civita Divino-Humana: In Honorem Annorum LX Georgii Bakalov*, ed. Tsvetelin Stepanov and Veselina Vachkova (Sophia: Tangra, 2004), 535.

² Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer, *Geschichte der Halbinsel Morea während des Mittelalters: ein historischer Versuch* (Stuttgart: J.G. Cotta’sche Buchhandlung, 1836).

³ For an overview of the politics see: Curta, “Barbarians in Dark-Age Greece: Slavs or Avars?,” 513–15.

⁴ For the results of the new approach see: Florin Curta, *The Edinburgh History of the Greeks, C. 500 to 1050: The Early Middle Ages* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011).

⁵ Ewald Kislinger, *Regionalgeschichte als Quellenproblem: Die Chronik von Monemvasia und das sizilianische Damonna. Eine historisch-topographische Studie* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2002), 13–25.

⁶ Nikos A. Veēs, *To Peri tēs ktiseōs tēs Monemvasias chronikon hai pēgai kai bē historikē sēmantikotēs autou*. (Athens: Vasilikon typographeion N. Chiōtē & K. Rousea, 1909); Nikos A. Veēs, *Chronicon Monemvasiae: A Study of Its Sources and Its Value as a Historical Source; Accompanied by a Critical*

essentially the same version of the text, but there are significant differences among the other manuscripts.⁷ The Iviron manuscript was thought to have been the earlier version,⁸ but because *Kutlumus* and *Taurinensis* use the older Alexandrian dating system, some scholars now believe they derive from the earliest version.⁹

The chronicle has a main narrative, in two parts, describing a) wars between the Romans and the Avars in the sixth century and b) the Avar conquest of the Peloponnese, the flight of indigenous inhabitants, and their return after a reconquest under Nikephoros I. This narrative, most likely originating in the tenth century, is in *Iviron 329* and a shorter version of it is in *Kutlumus 220* and *Taurinensis*.¹⁰ A continuation listing information about the bishoprics of the Peloponnese in the eleventh through fourteenth centuries is in *Kutlumus*, *Taurinensis*, and *Collegio Greco 12*.¹¹

The title of the “Chronicle of Monemvasia” is misleading because the town of Monemvasia is mentioned only once in the main narrative, which focuses on the Peloponnese more generally and pays particular attention to Patras. In *Taurinensis* the text has the title “On the Foundation of Monemvasia,” and in *Kutlumus*, “On When and How Monemvasia Was Founded.” These manuscripts also contain other notices pertinent to the history of Monemvasia and presumably originated there.¹² These titles were most likely added by those with special interests in Monemvasia. Based on its content, it would be more appropriately named the “Chronicle of Patras,” or the “Chronicle of the Peloponnese.”¹³

The two parts of the main narrative are each roughly the length of a long modern paragraph. The first paragraph describes the sixth century wars between Romans and Avars. The second paragraph tells a story of how an

Edition of Its 3 Versions of the Greek Text. Printed in Parallel Columns. With Introd., Notes and Commentary in Modern Greek. (Chicago: Ares, 1979); Giuseppe Pasini, ed., *Codices manuscripti Bibliothecae regii Taurinensis Athenaei: per linguas digesti, [et] binas in partes distributi, in quarum prima Hebraei, [et] Graeci, in altera Latini, Italici, [et] Gallici* (Turin: Ex Typographia Regia, 1749).

⁷ Haris Kalligas, *Byzantine Monemvasia: The Sources* (Monemvasia: Akrotheon, 1990), 10; Kislinger, *Regionalgeschichte als Quellenproblem*, 15–16.

⁸ Paul Lemerle, “La chronique improprement dite de Monemvasie: le contexte historique et légendaire,” *Revue des études Byzantines* 21 (1963): 22–23; Peter Charanis, “The Chronicle of Monemvasia and the Question of the Slavonic Settlements in Greece,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 5 (1950): 142–43; Kenneth M. Setton, “The Bulgars in the Balkans and the Occupation of Corinth in the Seventh Century,” *Speculum* 25, no. 4 (1950): 516.

⁹ Kalligas, *Byzantine Monemvasia*, 12–13. Disputed by Stanislaw Turlej, “Was Monemvasia Founded in the Times of Justinian I?,” *Byzantinoslavica* 58 (1997): 410.

¹⁰ Not all lines are in *Kutlumus*. Kislinger, *Regionalgeschichte als Quellenproblem*, 14–15.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 13–16.

¹² Kalligas, *Byzantine Monemvasia*, 10–12. Kislinger, *Regionalgeschichte als Quellenproblem*, 15, 20–24.

¹³ Lemerle, “La chronique improprement dite de Monemvasie: le contexte historique et légendaire,” 22.

invasion of Avars drove the Greek population of Patras, Argos, Corinth, and Laconia into exile: the people of Patras emigrated to Southern Italy, the Argives to the island of Orobe, Corinthians to Aegina, some of the Lakonians went to Demena in Sicily and others founded Monemvasia.¹⁴ The Avars are said to have ruled most of the Peloponnese from 587 until 805, when it was reconquered under Nikephoros I. Only the eastern part of the Peloponnese was free from Slavs (who are mentioned at this point for the first time).¹⁵ The governor of the Peloponnese, a member of the Skleros family, conquered and annihilated the Slavs. Emperor Nikephoros then worked to Christianize the barbarians and recalled the people of Patras, rebuilt their city, and installed their bishop as Metropolitan.¹⁶

The first paragraph about the wars between the Avars and the Romans draws information from the histories of Evagrius, Theophylakt, and Theophanes.¹⁷ The second paragraph about the Avar invasion, and exile and return of the Peloponnesians is less straightforward. The story switches from talking about Avars to Slavs without any explanation. Kresten argued that the source was an official imperial document describing the reconquest of Nikephoros I.¹⁸ The description of the impact of the Avar invasions is modeled closely on Pausanius's description of the Dorian invasion of the Peloponnese.¹⁹ This part of the text seems to have been compiled to support of the right of the bishop of Patras, rather than the bishop of Corinth, to have authority over the bishop of Lakedaimon.²⁰

Some scholars argue that Arethas, the tenth-century scholar and bishop of Caesarea, wrote the paragraphs on the Avar wars and the conquest and resettlement of the Peloponnese.²¹ Arethas wrote a marginal

¹⁴ Kislinger, *Regionalgeschichte als Quellenproblem*, 201–3.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 201–2.

¹⁶ This section of the text is translated in Charanis, “The Chronicle of Monemvasia and the Question of the Slavonic Settlements in Greece,” 148–49.

¹⁷ Kislinger, *Regionalgeschichte als Quellenproblem*, 25–29.

¹⁸ Otto Kresten, “Zur Echtheit des ‘sigillion’ des Kaisers Nikephoros I. für Patras,” *Römische Historische Mitteilungen* 19 (1977): 17–78.

¹⁹ Ilias Anagnostakis and Anthony Kaldellis, “The Textual Sources for the Peloponnese, A.D. 582–959: Their Creative Engagement with Ancient Literature,” *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 54, no. 1 (2013): 105–35.

²⁰ Curta, *The Edinburg History of the Greeks, C. 500 to 1050*, 253–55, 279; Setton, “The Bulgars in the Balkans and the Occupation of Corinth in the Seventh Century,” 517–20; Panayotis Yannopoulos, “Métropoles du Péloponnèse mésobyzantin: un souvenir des invasions avaro-slaves,” *Byzantion* 63 (1993): 388–400.

²¹ Johannes Koder, “Arethas von Kaisareia und die sogenannte Chronik von Monemvasia,” *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 25 (1976): 76–80; Kresten, “Zur Echtheit des ‘sigillion’ des Kaisers Nikephoros I. für Patras”; Kislinger, *Regionalgeschichte als Quellenproblem*, 37–40, 105–6; Warren T. Treadgold, *The Middle Byzantine Historians* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 124–26; Anagnostakis and Kaldellis, “The Textual Sources for the Peloponnese, A.D. 582–959.” Stīlpōn

comment containing much of the same narrative in a manuscript of Patriarch Nikephoros's history, *Moscow Graecus 213*.²² Arethas was a native of Patras and would have been well placed to argue for the primacy of the See of Patras. Anagnostakis and Kaldellis offer further arguments for the authorship of Arethas by demonstrating that the second paragraph on the conquest and resettlement of the Peloponnese is closely modeled on Pausanias's narrative of the Dorian invasion and that Arethas knew and used Pausanias elsewhere.²³ Other scholars prefer the argument that the author was an anonymous, well-educated cleric.²⁴

The two-paragraph main narrative is now most often thought to derive from the early tenth century, before 932, when Arethas died.²⁵ Duïchev dates it to after the reign of Nikephoros II Phokas (963–969) because Nikephoros I is called “the elder.”²⁶ The continuation, the list of events pertaining to Peloponnesian bishops in the eleventh–fourteenth centuries, reached its present form sometime after 1329, the date of its last notice.²⁷

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

The manuscripts are: *Iviron 329* (sixteenth century), *Kutlumus 220* (fifteenth or sixteenth century), *Taurinensis 336* (sixteenth century) now lost, and *Collegio Greco 12* (thirteenth century/fifteenth–sixteenth centuries).²⁸ Kislinger prints all the versions side by side to clarify their differences, and

Paraskeua Kyriakidēs, *Oi Slavoï en Peloponnēsō: Kōnstantinos o Porphyrogenētōs; Patriarchēs Nikolaos; Chronikon tēs Monemvasias, Arethas*, *Vyzantinai meletai* 6 (Thessaloniki: Ètaireia Makedonikōn Spoudōn, 1947), 92–93.

²² Koder, “Arethas von Kaisareia und die sogenannte Chronik von Monemvasia”; Anagnostakis and Kaldellis, “The Textual Sources for the Peloponnese, A.D. 582–959,” 114–15; Kislinger, *Regionalgeschichte als Quellenproblem*, 37–40.

²³ Anagnostakis and Kaldellis, “The Textual Sources for the Peloponnese, A.D. 582–959,” 111–15.

²⁴ Curta, *The Edinburgh History of the Greeks, c. 500 to 1050*, 279.

²⁵ Koder, “Arethas von Kaisareia und die sogenannte Chronik von Monemvasia”; Kresten, “Zur Echtheit des ‘sigillion’ des Kaisers Nikephoros I. für Patras”; Anagnostakis and Kaldellis, “The Textual Sources for the Peloponnese, A.D. 582–959”; Curta, *The Edinburgh History of the Greeks, C. 500 to 1050*, 279; Lemerle, “La chronique improprement dite de Monemvasie: le contexte historique et légendaire,” 33.

²⁶ Curta, “Barbarians in Dark-Age Greece: Slavs or Avars?,” 536; Ivan Duïchev, ed., *Cronaca di Monemvasia: introduzione, testo critico, note [e traduzione]*, Testi e monumenti 12 (Palermo: Assessorato alla istruzione della Regione siciliana, 1976), xliii; Ivan Duïchev, “Some Remarks on the Chronicle of Monemvasia,” in *Charanis Studies: Essays in Honor of Peter Charanis*, ed. Angeliki Laiou (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1980), 51–59.

²⁷ Kislinger, *Regionalgeschichte als Quellenproblem*, 64–72.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 13–25.

provides a chart explaining which publications included which sections and manuscripts:

Kislinger, Ewald. *Regionalgeschichte als Quellenproblem: Die Chronik von Monembasia und das sizilianische Damonna. Eine historisch-topographische Studie*. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2002: 199–207.

Editions

A critical edition of the first main part, using all three manuscripts:

Dučev, Ivan, ed. *Cronaca di Monemvasia: introduzione, testo critico, note [e traduzione]*. Testi e monumenti 12. Palermo: Assessorato alla istruzione della Regione siciliana, 1976.

Edition of the Taurinensis Manuscript

Pasini, Giuseppe, ed. *Codices manuscripti Bibliothecae regii Taurinensis Athenaei: per linguas digesti, [et] binas in partes distributi, in quarum prima Hebraei, [et] Graeci, in altera Latini, Italici, [et] Gallici*. Turin: Ex Typographia Regia, 1749.

Edition of the Taurinensis, Iviron and Kutlumus Manuscripts

Veēs, Nikos, A. *To Peri tēs ktiseōs tēs Monemvasias chronikon hai pēgai kai hē historikē sēmantikotēs autou*. Athens: Vasilikon typographeion N. Chiōtē & K. Rousea, 1909. Reprinted as: Veēs, Nikos A. *Chronicon Monembasiae: A Study of Its Sources and Its Value as a Historical Source; Accompanied by a Critical Edition of Its 3 Versions of the Greek Text. Printed in Parallel Columns. With Introd., Notes and Commentary in Modern Greek by N. Oikonomides*. Chicago: Ares, 1979.

Edition of the Iviron Manuscript

Lemerle, Paul. “La chronique improprement dite de Monemvasie: le contexte historique et légendaire.” *Revue des études Byzantines* 21 (1963): 5–49.

Edition of the Collegio Greco Manuscript

Lampros, Spyridōn. “Neos kōdix tou Chronikou Monemvasias.” *Neos Hellenomnemon* 9 (1912): 246–49.

Translations

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Charanis, Peter. “The Chronicle of Monemvasia and the Question of the Slavonic Settlements in Greece.” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 5 (1950): 139–66.

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Dučičev, Ivan, ed. *Cronaca di Monemvasia: introduzione, testo critico, note [e traduzione]*. Testi e monumenti 12. Palermo: Assessorato alla istruzione della Regione siciliana, 1976.

French

Lemerle, Paul. "Le Chronique improprement dite de Monemvasie." *Revue des études Byzantines* 21 (1963): 5–49.

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- Anagnostakis, Ilias, and Anthony Kaldellis. "The Textual Sources for the Peloponnese, A.D. 582–959: Their Creative Engagement with Ancient Literature." *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 54, no. 1 (2013): 105–35.
- Charanis, Peter. "The Chronicle of Monemvasia and the Question of the Slavonic Settlements in Greece." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 5 (1950): 139–66.
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- Dučičev, Ivan, ed. *Cronaca di Monemvasia: introduzione, testo critico, note [e traduzione]*. Testi e monumenti 12. Palermo: Assessorato alla istruzione della Regione siciliana, 1976.
- "Some Remarks on the Chronicle of Monemvasia." In *Charanis Studies: Essays in Honor of Peter Charanis*, edited by Angeliki E. Laiou, 51–59. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1980.
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- Lampros, Spyridōn. "Neos kōdix tou Chronikou Monemvasias." *Neos Hellenomnemon* 9 (1912): 246–49.
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- “The So-Called Chronicle of Monemvasia. A Historical Analysis.” *Byzantion* 68, no. 2 (1998): 447–68.
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Chronicon Bruxellense

This anonymous text is mostly a list of Roman emperors, beginning with Julius Caesar and ending with the death of Romanos III Argyros in 1034, with very few omissions. It survives in *Codex 11376* of the Royal Library of Brussels.

The text contains three distinct sections. The first lists the emperors of Rome from Julius Caesar to Constantinius I, but contains no further information except for the years of their rule. The second section lists emperors from Constantine to Michael III, who died in 867. This is the most extensive section and includes limited details about the reigns of each emperor and a number of major events, such as the first Russian attack on Constantinople. The entry for Justinian I (527–565) is the most extensive and detailed entry. The final section, like the first, is little more than a list and includes the emperors from Basil I to Romanos III Argyros. In addition to the succession of emperors, the *Chronikon* contains details regarding the churches, relics, and prominent buildings of Constantinople.¹ The text contains several chronological errors and misplaced entries, and large segments appear to have been copied from other sources; however, in places it provides information that is not found anywhere else.²

Franz Cumont suggests that the author resided in Constantinople because of the text's many details regarding places and events in the city. Cumont has speculated that he lived until at least the first years of the 1030s, during the reign of Romanos III Argyros (1028–1034), the final entry in the *Chronicon*, and may have been a clergyman in the Stoudios monastery.³

¹ Andreas Külzer, "Studien zum Chronicon Bruxellense," *Byzantion* 61 (1991): 420–47. On the dating of the first Russian attack, for which the *Chronicon* provides a more precise answer than other sources, see Vasilij Vasiljevskij, "God pervago našestvija Russkich na Konstantinopol," *Vizantijskii Vremennik* 1 (1894): 258; Carl de Boor, "Der Angriff der Rhos auf Konstantinopel," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 4 (1895): 445–66.

² Franz Cumont, *Chroniques byzantines du manuscrit 11376*, *Anecdota Bruxellensia* 1 (Gand: Librairie Clemm, 1894), 13–14.

³ *Ibid.*, 14–15.

Külzer agrees that the author was likely a member of the clergy – based on his keen interest in religious matters – but does not believe there is sufficient evidence to trace the text’s origins to this particular monastery.⁴

Manuscripts and Editions

Manuscripts

The only surviving manuscript of the *Chronicon* is *Codex 11376* (folio 155^r–165^r), located in the Royal Library of Brussels. It is believed to be a copy of an older original. Franz Cumont argued that the manuscript was likely written in the first half of the thirteenth century, while Andreas Külzer suggests a date in the second half of the same century. The first page of the Codex states that it was part of the library of one Pierre Pantin. After Pantin’s death in 1611, it changed hands several times – including a twenty-year stay in the National Library in Paris – and returned to Brussels in 1815.⁵

Editions

Cumont, Franz, ed. *Chroniques byzantines du manuscrit 11376*. Anecdota Bruxellensia 1. Gand: Librairie Clemm, 1894.

FURTHER READING

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Somers, Véronique and Bastien Kindt, eds. *Thesaurus Iosephi Genesisii aliarumque chronographiarum anonymarum. Corpus Christianorum. Thesaurus patrum Graecorum*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2009.

⁴ Külzer, “Studien zum Chronicon Bruxellense,” 418–19.

⁵ Cumont, *Chroniques byzantines du manuscrit 11376*, 13–18.

Psellos

Psellos is one of the greatest figures in Byzantine literature. His baptismal name was Constantine; he took the name Michael during a monastic retirement in 1054.¹ Born in Constantinople in 1018, Psellos received an outstanding education and, after serving in the provincial judicial administration, had a successful career as a court rhetorician and philosopher.² By his own account in the *Chronographia*, he was an influential courtier, although he may have been less important than he would like his readers to believe. He taught philosophy and had the title *Hypatos ton Philosophon*, “consul of the philosophers,” during the reign of Constantine IX (1042–1055).³ Psellos became a monk in the monastic community at Mt. Olympus in 1054 but returned to the capital shortly thereafter. It is widely assumed that his brief monastic retirement was politically motivated and that his return was due to a renewal of imperial favor.⁴ While he presents himself as at the center of court politics during the ascension of Michael VII, he disappears from view during Michael’s reign (1071–1078).⁵ The date of his death has been a matter of discussion, but it seems most likely that he died in 1076.⁶

¹ Anthony Kaldellis, ed., *Mothers and Sons, Fathers and Daughters: The Byzantine Family of Michael Psellos*, trans. David Jenkins, Stratis Papaioannou, and Anthony Kaldellis (South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006), 6.

² *Ibid.*, 3.

³ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁵ Psellos, *Chronographia*, Book 7.

⁶ The date of 1076 is preferred by Reinsch and Kaldellis. Jeffreys prefers 1078. Diether Roderich Reinsch, ed., *Michaelis Pselli Chronographia*, Millennium-Studien 51 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), XVI; Anthony Kaldellis, “The Date of Psellos’ Death, Once Again: Psellos Was Not the Michael of Nikomedeia Mentioned by Attaleiates,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 104 (2011): 649–61; Michael Jeffreys, “Psellos in 1078,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 107, no. 1 (2014): 77–96; Apostolos Karpozilos, “When Did Michael Psellos Die? The Evidence of the Dioptra,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 96 (2003): 671–77; Andreas Schminck, “Zum Todesjahr des Michael Psellos,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 94, no. 1 (2001): 190–96. For a more detailed biography of Psellos see Anthony Kaldellis, ed., *Mothers and*

Other Works: Psellos was a prolific and highly versatile writer in most genres of Byzantine literary activity of the eleventh century. As well as his two histories, he wrote several philosophical and theological treatises, legal texts, numerous orations and hundreds of letters.⁷

Chronographia

A vivid and artfully constructed literary masterpiece, Michael Psellos's *Chronographia* is also a key source for political history of the eleventh century. Psellos creates detailed, vibrant descriptions of individual emperors and events within Constantinople. He gives rich descriptions of his characters' physical and emotional states, and uses a wide variety of literary and rhetorical techniques that make his writing a high point of Byzantine literature as well as history. Psellos maintains a strong authorial presence throughout the narrative, drawing attention to his role in various affairs and his close proximity to certain emperors. His account is highly personal and provides his individual view of the physical appearances, personalities, and psychologies of the emperors. Psellos is entirely concerned with imperial politics in Constantinople and provides very little information about external affairs or events outside the capital.

Psellos's history covers the period from Basil II's rise to power in 976 until the reign of Michael VII (1071–1078). Psellos's narrative picks up at the point where the history of Leo the Deacon ends. Basil II's reign is treated briefly and the narrative becomes more detailed as it moves toward contemporary history and Psellos's own memories become his major source. The text is organized into seven books.

Psellos may not have chosen the title *Chronographia* for his work. In the text he usually refers to his work as a "history" and only once uses the term "chronographia," leading Hunger to suggest that *Chronographia* was not Psellos's own title.⁸ The term *chronographia* is rare, however, and may reflect Psellos's understanding that what he wrote differed from the conventions of historical writing.⁹ The text is far from a year-by-year chronicle. It also

Sons, Fathers and Daughters: the Byzantine Family of Michael Psellos (South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006), 5–16.

⁷ For the full list of the writings of Psellos, see Paul Moore, *Iter Psellicum: A Detailed Listing of Manuscript Sources for All Works Attributed to Michael Psellos, Including a Comprehensive Bibliography* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2005).

⁸ Herbert Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner: Philosophie, Rhetorik, Epistolographie, Geschichtsschreibung, Geographie*, vol. 1, *Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft*, 12.5 (Munich: Beck, 1978), 377–79.

⁹ Ruth Macrides, "The Historian in the History," in *Philellēn: Studies in Honour of Robert Browning*, ed. Costas N. Constantinides, Nikolaos Panagiotakes, and Elizabeth Jeffreys (Venice: Istituto ellenico di studi bizantini e postbizantini di Venezia, 1996), 214.

breaks some of the conventions of history writing by presenting matters through a personal memoir.

It appears that a first version of the history ended with the deposition of Isaac I (1057–1059). Book 7, Chapter 51 begins a summary discussion of Isaac I that contains what appears to be an ending for the history. This version was probably completed in the early 1060s. The second version, which carried the narrative down to the reign of Michael VII Doukas (1071–1078), was probably written in the mid-1070s.¹⁰ The section of Book 7 devoted to Michael VII is a set of brief and flattering descriptions of Michael VII, along with other members of his family. Here Psellos does not create a historical narrative but rather provides glowing descriptions of these individuals. Scholars speculate that this material was written at a later date as a bid to return to imperial favor.¹¹ The final section is a letter from the emperor to Phokas which is not considered to be part of Psellos's history.¹²

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

There is one thirteenth-century manuscript of the complete text, *Parisinus Graecus 1712*. This is the same manuscript that contains the text of the history of Leo the Deacon and the chronicle of Pseudo-Symeon. A shorter fragment is in *Sinaiticus Graecus III7*.¹³

Editions

Reinsch, Diether Roderich, ed. *Michaelis Pselli Chronographia*. Millennium-Studien 51. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014.

Impellizzeri, Salvatore, ed. *Imperatori di Bisanzio: cronografia*. trans. Silvia Ronchey. 2 vols. Milan: Fondazione L. Valla: A. Mondadori, 1984.

¹⁰ Kaldellis, *The Argument of Psellos' Chronographia*, 11; Hunger, *Die Hochsprachliche*, 378.

¹¹ Anthony Kaldellis, *The Argument of Psellos' Chronographia* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 11; Dimitris Krallis, "Attaleiates as a Reader of Psellos," in *Reading Michael Psellos*, ed. David Jenkins and Charles Barber (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 189–90; Jeffrey Walker, "Michael Psellos on Rhetoric: A Translation and Commentary on Psellos' Synopsis of Hermogenes," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 31 (2001): 14.

¹² Reinsch argues that the letter at the end is not composed by Psellos but is an original document by the chancellery of Basil II. Diether Reinsch, "Theophylaktos Simokattes in der Kanzlei Kaiser Basileios' II. Zur Γραφή Του Βασιλεως Προς Τον Φωκων am Ende der Chronographia des Michael Psellos." *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 58 (2008): 147–51; Jakov Ljubarskij, *Michail Psell: licnost' i tvorcestvo: k istorii vizantijskogo predgumanizma* (Moscow: Nauka, 1978), 181–84.

¹³ Reinsch, ed., *Michaelis Pselli Chronographia*, XVIII–XXV; Moore, *Iter Psellianum*, 456–57.

Renauld, Émile, ed. *Chronographie; ou, histoire d'un siècle de Byzance (976–1077)*. 2 vols. Collection Byzantine. Paris: Société d'édition "Les Belles Lettres," 1926. Reprinted in 1967.

The first publication of the *Chronographia* was that of Sathas in the late nineteenth century.¹⁴

Translations

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¹⁴ Konstantinos N. Sathas, ed., *The History of Psellus, Edited with Critical Notes and Indices by Constantine Sathas* (London: Methuen, 1899).

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Psellos *Historia Syntomos*

The *Historia Syntomos* is a brief textbook of Roman history written by Psellos. Unlike the *Chronographia*, the *Historia Syntomos* is relatively lacking in detailed description. Rather, it provides a sweeping account of all Roman history, organized around biographies of the rulers. It begins with Romulus, discusses each of the kings of Rome and continues through the first six sets of consuls of the Roman Republic. Psellos then skips the rest of Republican history, on the grounds that the constant changing of rulers with the consular system does not provide continuity of leadership, and turns to the career of Julius Caesar. Psellos then tells the stories of the emperors from Augustus to Basil II. Psellos is explicit that the purpose of this history is so that the reader “may either imitate the good deeds of the emperors, or criticize and despise the bad ones.”¹⁵ Because of the overtly

¹⁵ William J. Aerts, ed. and trans., *Michaelis Pselli Historia syntomos*, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 30 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1990), 15.

didactic, and simple, nature of this history it is presumed to have been written for Michael VII when Psellos served as his tutor.

Psellos is now accepted as the author of the *Historia Syntomos*. His authorship had been disputed because the style differs so markedly from that of Psellos's other writings, but more detailed analyses show commonalities in vocabulary and thought.¹⁶ This appears to be a text written by Psellos in a deliberately simple style.

Manuscript

The *Historia Syntomos* survives in a single, fourteenth-century manuscript, the *Codex Sinaiticus* 1117.

Edition and Translation

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¹⁶ In the introduction of his edition, Aerts makes the case that another eleventh-century author, perhaps John Italos, wrote the *Historia syntomos*. Aerts, ed, *Michaelis Pselli Historia syntomos*. For confirmation of Psellos's authorship, see: John Duffy and Stratis Papaioannou, "Michael Psellos and the Authorship of the *Historia Syntomos*: Final Considerations," in *Vyzantio kratos kai koinōnia: Mnēmē Nikou Oikonomidē / Byzantium, State and Society: In Memory of Nikos Oikonomides*, ed. Anna Avramea, Angeliki Laiou, and Evangelos Chrysos (Athens: Institutouto Vyzantinōn Ereunōn, Ethniko Hidryma Ereunōn, 2003), 219–29; Kenneth Snipes, "A Newly Discovered Historical Work of Michael Psellos," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 32.2 (1982): 53–61; Jakov Ljubarskij, "Some Notes on the Newly Discovered Historical Work by Psellos," in *To Hellenikon. Studies in Honor of Speros Vryonis.*, ed. John Langdon, Stephen Reinert, Jelisaveta Allen, and Christos Ioannides, vol. 1 (New Rochelle: Aristide D. Caratzas, 1993), 213–28.

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John Xiphilinos

John Xiphilinos was a monk and scholar in Constantinople active in the second half of the eleventh century. During the reign of Michael VII Doukas (1071–1078), Xiphilinos made a summary of Books 36–80 of Cassius Dio’s history of Rome, covering the years 68 BCE to 229 CE.

In the midst of his summary of Dio, he pauses to identify himself as the nephew of the Patriarch John, writing during the reign of Michael Doukas.¹ This refers to John Xiphilinos who was patriarch from 1064–1075. John Xiphilinos the historian also wrote fifty-three homilies and a *menologion* dedicated to Alexios Komnenos (1081–1118) that survives only in a Georgian translation. Although we do not have birth or death dates for the historian, we can tell that he was writing in the 1070s and 1080s.

Although Xiphilinos worked mostly by cutting Dio’s text, his changes to the material were thoughtful and work to focus his history far more on the moral character of the actors in history, particularly emperors. His interest in a summary history of the early Roman emperors can be seen as part of an intellectual trend in the late eleventh century.² Xiphilinos shortens Dio’s text considerably, omitting many, but not all, speeches.³ He seems to have kept speeches and exposition that reflect on the proper behavior of emperors.⁴ Dio’s authorial interjections about himself are retained in the summary, but Xiphilinos also added his own, clarifying which historian

¹ Christopher Thomas Mallan, “The Style, Method, and Programme of Xiphilinos’ *Epitome* of Cassius Dio’s *Roman History*,” *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 53, no. 3 (2013): 613.

² Mallan, “Style, Method, and Programme”; Athanasios Markopoulos, “Roman Antiquarianism: Aspects of the Roman Past in the Middle Byzantine Period,” in *Proceedings of the 21st International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys and F. Haarer (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 277–97; Dimitris Krallis, *Michael Attaleiates and the Politics of Imperial Decline in Eleventh-Century Byzantium* (Tempe: ACMRS, 2012), 52–69; Paul Magdalino, “Aspects of Twelfth-Century Byzantine Kaiserkritik,” *Speculum* 58, no. 2 (1983): 326–46.

³ Peter A. Brunt, “On Historical Fragments and Epitomes,” *The Classical Quarterly* 30, no. 2 (1980): 489–90.

⁴ Mallan, “Style, Method, and Programme,” 618–21.

was speaking. Mallan argues that this reflects the trend in eleventh-century history writing for historians to comment on the action in their own voice.⁵ Xiphilinos kept nearly all of Dio's quotations from Homer and ancient drama, and his own additions often work to display his classical erudition.⁶ His version of Dio is less interested in constitutional issues than in presenting models of good and bad behavior. Xiphilinos adjusts the organizational structure of Dio's history to be a series of portraits of individual emperors, rather than Dio's somewhat more annalistic style.⁷ This is in keeping with the trend in Byzantine history writing to treat the past as a series of biographies of emperors.⁸

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

There are fourteen complete and two partial manuscripts, all dated to the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries. The manuscripts are described in:

Boissevain, Ursulus, ed. "De Xiphilini Codicibus." In *Cassii Dionis Cocceiani Historiarum romanarum quae supersunt*, 2: I–XVII. Berlin: Weidmann, 1898.

Editions

Boissevain, Ursulus., ed. "Xiphilini Epitome librorum 36–80." In *Cassii Dionis Cocceiani Historiarum romanarum quae supersunt*, 3: 478–730. Berlin: Weidmann, 1901.

Xiphilinos was published by Henri Estienne in 1592 and by Wilhelm Xylander in 1558.⁹

⁵ *Ibid.*, 622.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 622–23.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 617. Compared to other classical historians, Dio was already more focused on imperial biography. Christopher Pelling, "Cassius Dio on the Early Principate," in *Portraits: Biographical Representation in the Greek and Latin Literature of the Roman Empire*, ed. Mark J. Edwards and Simon Swain (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 117–44.

⁸ Athanasios Markopoulos, "From Narrative Historiography to Historical Biography. New Trends in Byzantine Historical Writing in the 10th–11th Centuries," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 102, no. 2 (2009): 697–715.

⁹ Henri Estienne, ed., *E Dione excerptae historiae ab Ioanne Xiphilino*. (Geneva: H. Stephanus, 1592); Wilhelm Xylander, ed., *Dionis Cassii Nicaei, Romanae historiae libri ... Additum est Ioannis Xiphilini è Dione Compendium* (Basil: Apud Ioannem Oporinum, 1558).

Translations

English

Manning, trans. *The History of Dion Cassius: Abridg'd by Xiphilin: Containing the Most Considerable Passages under the Roman Emperors, from the Time of Pompey the Great to the Reign of Alexander Severus*. London: A. & J. Churchill, 1704.

Starting Point

Mallan, Christopher Thomas. "The Style, Method, and Programme of Xiphilinus' *Epitome* of Cassius Dio's *Roman History*." *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 53, no. 3 (2013): 610–44.

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Michael Attaleiates

This detailed classicizing history covers the period from 1034 to 1079 and is a vital source for eleventh-century history, often offering an enlightening alternative to the *Chronographia* of Michael Psellos. The history is dedicated to Nikephoros III Botaneiates (1178–1181) and it ends with an encomium to Botaneiates.

Attaleiates's *History* is interested in explaining the decline of the Byzantine Empire in the eleventh century. The text focuses on the military and territorial losses suffered by the empire, such as the Norman conquest of Sicily, as well as numerous rebellions and civil wars. The text's theme is one of "growing political instability in the empire, and the incompetence and disloyalty of the political and military orders."¹ The text casts Botaneiates as a savior who ought to end imperial defeat.² Krallis argues that the final encomium to Botaneiates is insincere on the grounds that the stories, inserted into the historical narrative, about Botaneiates's career before he became emperor do not portray Botaneiates as exhibiting the characteristics of a virtuous Roman ruler.³

The *History* narrates the years 1034 to 1079 but the majority of the text is devoted to the final two decades, when Attaleiates was a well-connected eye-witness.⁴ Attaleiates's coverage becomes increasingly detailed and comprehensive as it reaches more contemporary events. He presents himself as accompanying Romanos Diogenes on the ill-fated campaign to Mantzikert and recounts Romanos's downfall with great sympathy.⁵ The

¹ Anthony Kaldellis and Dimitris Krallis, trans., *Michael Attaleiates: The History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), xv.

² *Ibid.*, ix.

³ Dimitris Krallis, *Michael Attaleiates and the Politics of Imperial Decline in Eleventh-Century Byzantium* (Tempe: ACMRS, 2012), 142–57.

⁴ Krallis, *Michael Attaleiates and the Politics of Imperial Decline in Eleventh-Century Byzantium*, xxxi.

⁵ For more on Attaleiates and the battle of Mantzikert, see Antonios Vratimos, "Was Michael Attaleiates Present at the Battle of Mantzikert?" *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 105, no. 2 (2012): 829–39; Speros Vryonis, "The Greek and Arabic Sources on the Battle of Mantzikert," in *Byzantine Studies*,

history is written as a single, continuous text rather than being divided into books. The focus of the text shifts geographically from west to east as dictated by the narrative.⁶

The history was dedicated to Botaneiates in 1079 or 1080.⁷ All appearances of Botaneiates in the text prior to 1070 are clearly later insertions to an existing text, according to Kaldellis and Krallis. This suggests that Attaleiates began work on the *History* before Botaneiates became emperor.⁸

Michael Attaleiates is known through his history and a monastic charter in which he described his life and career.⁹ It is estimated that he was born shortly before 1025, in or near the city of Attaleia on the coast of Asia Minor, and went to Constantinople to pursue higher education, likely before 1047.¹⁰ Krallis thinks it unlikely that Attaleiates could have been studying in Constantinople in this era without being influenced by the teachings of Michael Psellos.¹¹

After receiving a legal education, Attaleiates served as a military judge under Romanos IV Diogenes. Attaleiates describes himself in his history as traveling with the army to Mantzikert in 1071. Attaleiates's career does not seem to have been affected negatively by his association with Diogenes or the military defeat at Mantzikert. He returned to Constantinople after the battle and acquired a position within the court of Michael VII Doukas.¹² Attaleiates considered himself to be among the ruling elite, and lays much of the fault of Byzantium's decline at the feet of his disloyal and corrupt peers.¹³ Papaioannou argues that Attaleiates's rhetorical style draws most on the well-known liturgical homilies of Gregory of Nazianzos and that the number of his direct allusions to classical literature has been over-represented in the *index locorum* of the Tsolakis edition.¹⁴

Essays on the Slavic World and the Eleventh Century, ed. Speros Vryonis (New Rochelle: Aristide D. Caratzas, 1992), 125–40.

⁶ Kaldellis and Krallis, *Michael Attaleiates: The History*, xii.

⁷ Krallis, *Michael Attaleiates and the Politics of Imperial Decline in Eleventh-Century Byzantium*, xxi.

⁸ Kaldellis and Krallis, *Michael Attaleiates: The History*, xvi.

⁹ Paul Gautier, "La diataxis de Michel Attaliate," *Revue des études Byzantines* 39 (1981): 5–143.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 4–7.

¹¹ Dimitris Krallis, "Attaleiates as a Reader of Psellos," in *Reading Michael Psellos*, ed. Charles Barber and David Jenkins (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 168.

¹² Anthony Kaldellis and Dimitris Krallis, trans., *The History: Michael Attaleiates* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), viii; Krallis, *Michael Attaleiates and the Politics of Imperial Decline*, 37–38.

¹³ Stratis Papaioannou, "Remarks on Michael Attaleiates' History," in *Pour l'amour de Byzance: Hommage Paolo Odorico*, ed. Christian Gastgeber, Charalampos Messis, Dan Ioan Muresan, and Filippo Ronconi (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2013), 155–74; Kaldellis and Krallis, *The History: Michael Attaleiates*, xvi.

¹⁴ Papaioannou, "Remarks on Michael Attaleiates' History," 166–74.

Historians such as Alexander Kazhdan, Michael Angold, and Michael Whitby have argued that Attaleiates and Psellos represented very different aspects of the Constantinopolitan ruling elite.¹⁵ In this strand of scholarship Attaleiates is cast as a representative of the military aristocracy, while Psellos is an urbane courtier and bureaucrat.¹⁶ Krallis, on the other hand, suggests a much closer intellectual relationship than previously assumed.¹⁷ He argues that the academic circles in Constantinople would have been small, and that Psellos would have been an influence, if not as a teacher, then at least as a colleague in learning. Krallis suggests that Psellos's views influenced Attaleiates's history and that the two texts should be read in dialogue.¹⁸

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

Michael Attaleiates's *History* is known through two twelfth-century manuscripts: *Paris Coislinianus Graecus 136* and *Scorialensis T-III-9*.¹⁹

Editions

Tsolakis [Tsolakēs], Eudoxos, ed. *Historia: Michaelis Attaliatae*. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 50. Athens: Academia Atheniensis Institutum Litterarum Graecarum et Latinarum Studiis Destinatum, 2011.

Martín, Inmaculada Pérez, ed. *Miguel Atalíates, Historia*. Nueva Roma 15. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2002.

¹⁵ Alexander Kazhdan, "The Social Views of Michael Attaleiates," in *Studies on Byzantine Literature of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 84–85; Michael Angold and Michael Whitby, "Historiography," in *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys, John Haldon, and Robin Cormack, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 843–44.

¹⁶ Krallis, *Michael Attaleiates and the Politics of Imperial Decline*, 72; Franz Hermann Tinnfeld, *Kategorien der Kaiserkritik in der byzantinischen Historiographie* (Munich: Fink, 1971), 130.

¹⁷ Dimitris Krallis, "Attaleiates as a Reader of Psellos," in *Reading Michael Psellos* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 177–80. Krallis, *Michael Attaleiates and the Politics of Imperial Decline in Eleventh-Century Byzantium*, 71–114.

¹⁸ Krallis, "Attaleiates as a Reader of Psellos," 167–71; Krallis, *Michael Attaleiates and the Politics of Imperial Decline in Eleventh-Century Byzantium*, 71–114.

¹⁹ Eudoxos Tsolakis [Tsolakēs], ed., *Historia: Michaelis Attaliatae*, vol. 50, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae (Athens: Academia Atheniensis Institutum Litterarum Graecarum et Latinarum Studiis Destinatum, 2011), LVII–LXXI.

Publication History

The *History* of Attaleiates was not published until the nineteenth century when it was edited for the Bonn Corpus by Immanuel Bekker.²⁰ This edition used only *Paris Coislinianus 136*. It was published with a translation by Wladimir de Presle.²¹

*Translations**English*

Kaldellis, Anthony and Dimitris Krallis, trans., *Michael Attaleiates: The History*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012.

French (Partial, up to Chapter 34)

Grégoire, Henri. "Michel Attaliatès Histoire: traduction Française." *Byzantion* 28 (1958): 325–62.

Greek

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²⁰ Eudoxos Tsolakis [Tsolakēs], ed., *Historia: Michaelis Attalíatae*, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 50 (Athens: Academia Atheniensis Institutum Litterarum Graecarum et Latinarum Studiis Destinatum, 2011), LXXI.

²¹ Wladimir Brunet de Presle and Immanuel Bekker, eds., *Michaelis Attalíotae Historia*, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 50 (Bonn: Weber, 1853).

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John Skylitzes and Skylitzes Continuatus

The *Synopsis historion* provides one of the only political narratives for later tenth and early eleventh-century history. It covers the period from 811–1057 and survives in nine manuscripts. The text is a compilation of selections from older histories, sometimes copied word for word, sometimes with deletions or embellishments by Skylitzes.¹ It was composed in the late eleventh century.² The text is a narrative of political and military history focusing on the lives and choices of emperors, revolts, and occasionally ecclesiastical politics.³

The *Synopsis* opens with a prologue in which the author criticizes much of recent Byzantine historical writing, which he accused of being too focused on recent events, too rooted in personal prejudices, and lacking in detail and factual accuracy. Instead, Skylitzes praised the work of George the Synkellos and Theophanes Confessor. He claimed that he would omit passages from his sources that he believed contained more emotion than fact. In the prologue, Skylitzes names fourteen histories that he used as sources for his own. Most of these texts have not survived. It cannot be confirmed that he used all of these, and he may have relied on other sources that he does not mention explicitly.⁴

Scholars have worked to understand the sources Skylitzes used because some may have been more contemporaneous with the events they describe.⁵

¹ Bernard Flusin, “Re-writing History: John Skylitzes’ ‘Synopsis Historion,’” in *John Skylitzes: A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811–1057*, trans. John Wortley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), xii–xiii. For more on how Skylitzes utilized and modified his sources, see especially Catherine Holmes, “The Rhetorical Structures of John Skylitzes’ Synopsis Historion,” in *Rhetoric in Byzantium*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 187–99; Catherine Holmes, *Basil II and the Government of Empire: 976–1025* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

² Flusin, “Re-writing History,” xii; Werner Seibt, “Ioannes Skylitzes. Zur Person des Chronisten,” *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 25 (1976): 85. Holmes, *Basil II*, 85.

³ Flusin, “Re-writing History,” xxiii–xxix.

⁴ *Ibid.*, xii–xxiii; 1–3.

⁵ For example see Peter Frei, “Das Geschichtswerk des Theodoros Daphnopates als Quelle der Synopsis Historiarum des Johannes Skylitzes,” in *Lebendige Altertumswissenschaft*, ed. Manfred Kandler and Erwin Plöckinger, 1985, 348–53; Jonathan Shepard, “A Suspected Source of Skylitzes’

Demetrios Polemis and several other historians have questioned whether some of Skylitzes's statements were invented by the author, rather than derived from now-lost sources.⁶

Skylitzes based his account of the reign of Romanos Lakepenos on the third part of *Theophanes Continuatus* (known as Text III or Book VI). Since this text survives, we are able to compare it to Skylitzes to see how he adjusted his source. The result of this analysis shows that Skylitzes omitted precise details and minor characters in order to streamline the plot and heighten the drama of the particular episode.⁷

The *Synopsis* is generally favorable toward the Macedonian dynasty and more critical of the Amorian emperors, along with any others Skylitzes regarded as impious and unjust. Skylitzes identifies the reign of Constantine IX Monomachos as a major turning point after which, in his view, the empire began to decline.⁸

Skylitzes was a legal scholar and high-ranking imperial official active in the later eleventh century. Little is known about his life. John Skylitzes, the author of the history, seems to be the same person as the John Thrakesios known from legal texts of the 1090s and mentioned in the histories of Kedrenos and Zonaras.⁹ John Thrakesios held the title of *droungarios* of the watch, which in this era was the head of the imperial judiciary, and the high honor of *kouropalates*. Kedrenos also calls him a *protovestiarios*, although Seibt corrects this to *protovestes* on the grounds that the title *protovestiarios* was only given to members of the imperial family.¹⁰ Holmes argues that, under Alexios Komnenos (1081–1118), this title was given to close supporters of his regime and sees it as evidence that John held a high position in Alexios's court.¹¹ The name Thrakesios suggests that his family came from the Thracian *theme* in western Asia Minor.¹² Skylitzes was likely

Synopsis Historion: The Great Catacalon Cecaumenus," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 16 (1992): 171–81; Mikhail Iakovlevich Siuziumov, "Ob istochnikakh L'va D'iakona i Skilit'sy," *Vizantiiskoe obozrenie* 2 (1916): 106–66.

⁶ Flusin, "Re-writing History," xxii; Demetrios Polemis, "Some Cases of Erroneous Identification in the Chronicle of Scylitzes," *Byzantinoslavica* 26 (1975): 74–81.

⁷ Holmes, *Basil II*, 125–52.

⁸ Flusin, "Re-writing History," xxiii–xxix; Theoni Sklavos, "Moralising History: The Synopsis Historiarum of John Skylitzes," in *Byzantine Narrative: Papers in Honour of Roger Scott*, ed. John Burke, Ursula Betka, Penelope Buckley, Kathleen Hay, Roger Scott, and Andrew Stephenson (Melbourne: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 2006), 110–19.

⁹ Seibt, "Ioannes Skylitzes," 81–86. Holmes, *Basil II*, 82–85.

¹⁰ Seibt, "Ioannes Skylitzes," 83–84.

¹¹ Holmes, *Basil II*, 84–88.

¹² Jean-Claude Cheynet, "Introduction: John Skylitzes, the Author and His Family," in *John Skylitzes: A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811–1057*, trans. John Wortley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), ix.

born sometime before 1050. Nothing is known of his early life or family background. Three of his legal writings are known to modern scholars, of which two still exist, including a 1091 petition to Alexios I regarding the latter's new betrothal law.¹³ The date of Skylitzes's death is unknown, but he may have lived into the twelfth century. In the decades that followed, several other members of the Skylitzes family achieved prominent positions in the imperial administration.¹⁴

Skylitzes Continuatus

Skylitzes Continuatus is the name given to the extension of the history that exists in some manuscripts. This section covers the years 1057–1079. Eudoxos Tsolakēs, Werner Seibt, Catherine Holmes, and Bernard Flusin believe that the *Continuatus* was written by Skylitzes himself, likely at a slightly later date than the first part of the *Synopsis* and possibly using the history of Michael Attaleiates. By contrast, Alexander Kazhdan, Eirene-Sophia Kiapidou, Carl de Boor, and Gyula Moravcsik believe that the *Continuatus* was the work of a different author.¹⁵

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

The *Synopsis* survives in its entirety in nine manuscripts, ranging from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries.¹⁶ It was copied in full into the *Chronographia* of George Kedrenos, and fragments of the text are extant in a number of other manuscripts. Hans Thurn has suggested that our

¹³ Angeliki Laiou, "Imperial Marriages and Their Critics in the Eleventh Century: The Case of Skylitzes," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 46 (1992): 166–67.

¹⁴ Catherine Holmes, *Basil II*, 80–91; Cheynet, "Introduction," xi–x; Seibt, "Ioannes Skylitzes," 81–86; Hans Peter Thurn, *Byzanz – wieder ein Weltreich. Das Zeitalter der Makedonischen Dynastie. Teil 1: Ende des Bilderstreites und Makedonische Renaissance (Anfang 9. bis Mitte 10. Jahrhundert)*, *Byzantinische Geschichtsschreiber* 15 (Graz: Styria, 1983), 9.

¹⁵ Flusin, "Re-writing History," xxxi; Seibt, "Ioannes Skylitzes"; Holmes, *Basil II*, 83; Laiou, "Imperial Marriages and Their Critics in the Eleventh Century," 166–67; Alexander Kazhdan, "The Social Views of Michael Attaleiates," in *Studies on Byzantine Literature of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 23–86; Eirene-Sophia Kiapidou, "E patroteta tes Synnecheias tou Skylitzes kai ta problemata tes: synkleiseis kai apokliseis apo te Synopse Istorion," *Epetēris Etairaia Vyzantinōn Spoudōn* 42 (2004–2006): 329–62; Carl de Boor, "Weiteres zur Chronik des Skylitzes," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 14 (1905): 409–67; Gyula Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica 1. Die byzantinischen Quellen der Geschichte der Türkvolker*, *Berliner byzantinistische Arbeiten* 10 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1958), 340.

¹⁶ Hans Thurn, ed., *Ioannis Skylitzae Synopsis historiarum* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1973), xx–xxviii.

medieval manuscripts derive from a copy of the text that contained extensive annotations.¹⁷

The best known manuscript is the richly illustrated *Codex Matritensis Bibliotheca Nacional Vitrinas 26.2*, known as the “Madrid Skylitzes.” It was produced in Sicily in the late twelfth century and contains 574 illustrations.¹⁸

Editions

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Tsolakēs, Eudoxos, ed. *Ἐσυνεχεια τῶν χρονογραφίῶν τοῦ Ἰωάννου Σκυλίτζη*. Idryma Meletōn Chersonēsou tou Aimou 105. Thessaloniki: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1968.

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Synopsis historiarum incipiens a Nicephori imperatoris à genicis obitu ad Isacii Comneni imperium: codex Matritensis Graecus Vitr. 26–2, facsimile edition. Scientific consultant Agamemnōn Tselikas. Athens: Milētos, 2000.

Publication History

A Latin translation by Ioannes Baptista Gabius was published in Venice in 1570. Before the publication of Thurn’s edition, scholars would use the Bonn edition of Kedrenos for Skylitzes because Kedrenos copied Skylitzes verbatim.

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Wortley, John, trans., *John Skylitzes: A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811–1057* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

¹⁷ Thurn, *Ioannis Skylitzae Synopsis historiarum*, xx–xxviii.

¹⁸ See especially Elena N. Boeck, *Imagining the Byzantine Past: The Perception of History in the Illustrated Manuscripts of Skylitzes and Manasses* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Vasiliki Tsamakda, *The Illustrated Chronicle of Ioannes Skylitzes in Madrid* (Leiden: Alexandros, 2002).

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George Kedrenos



In the late eleventh or early twelfth century, extant histories were combined and edited to compile a massive unified history from Creation to 1057, entitled the *Synopsis istorion*. The opening of the text names its author as George Kedrenos. A poem describing the history, found in a later manuscript of the text, says that George was a *proedros*.¹ This history was written after that of John Skylitzes in the late eleventh century, and before our oldest manuscript, which is stylistically dated to the first half of the twelfth.

For the years 811–1057, the Kedrenos text copied the history by John Skylitzes precisely.² For the period prior to 811 it extracts the histories of Pseudo-Symeon, Symeon the Logothete, and George the Monk.³ For the sixth and seventh centuries he used the Chronicle of Pseudo-Symeon, which was relying on Theophanes.⁴

Although Kedrenos does not provide any independent information about the past, and often clings to the wording of texts he is compiling, his editorial choices can vary the meanings and implications of the stories he

¹ Carl de Boor, "Weiteres zur Chronik des Skylitzes," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 14, no. 2 (1905): 426–27.

² Riccardo Maisano, "Note su Giorgio Cedreno e la tradizione storiografica bizantina," *Rivista di studi bizantini e slavi* 3 (1983): 227–48.

³ Pseudo-Symeon (in *Parisinus Gracus 1712*) has not yet been published completely. The portion covering 318 to 963 is published in Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Theophanes continuatus, Ioannes Cameniata, Symeon Magister [i.e. Pseudo-Symeon], Georgius Monachus*, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 33 (Bonn: Weber, 1838). On the connections between the texts, see Apostolos D. Karpozilos, *Vyzantinoi historikoi kai chronographoi*, vol. 3 (Athens: Kanakē, 2009), 331–40; Kurt Schweinburg, "Die ursprüngliche Form der Kedrenchronik," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 30 (1929): 68–77; Herbert Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner* (Munich: Beck, 1978), 393; Athanasios Markopoulos, "Ἐ chronographia tou Pseudosymeon kai oi peges tes" (PhD diss., Panepistēmion Iōanninōn, 1978); Karl Praechter, *Quellenkritische Studien zu Kedrenos (Cod. Paris. gr. 1712)*, Sitzungsberichte der Königlich Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-Philologische und Historische Klasse 2, part 3 (Munich: Franz in Komm, 1898).

⁴ Roger Scott, "Narrating Justinian: From Malalas to Manasses," in *Byzantine Narrative: Papers in Honour of Roger Scott*, ed. John Burke, Ursula Betka, Penelope Buckley, Kathleen Hay, Roger Scott, and Andrew Stephenson (Melbourne: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 2006), 37–39.

preserves. Scott and Maisano argue that his choices regarding the inclusion and framing of his material display his ideas about history.⁵

Contents

Kedrenos's history has not been studied much, probably because he does not present original information about his recent history and he did not use ancient texts in a way helpful to classicists. Because there is so little scholarship on the text, it is worth summarizing at greater length.

Kedrenos's text opens with Creation as told in Genesis, but he does not so much tell biblical stories, as set the stories – of which the audience is assumed to already have knowledge – in a larger cultural and historical context.⁶ The sections dealing with early history interweave biblical and Near Eastern history with statements historicizing classical mythology. The following sketch of topics is not a complete synopsis, but helps explain this almost indescribable work.

The creation of light leads to a discussion of the name given the first month by the Hebrews, Romans, and Egyptians.⁷ Noah was called Xisuthros by the Chaldeans.⁸ One of the descendants of Shem was Orion, also called Chronos, who with his wife Semramis, also called Rhea, ruled the Assyrians. Their children Zeus and Hera ruled after them, and their children settled various regions.⁹ Then the story returns to biblical patriarchs through Moses, noting that Isaac was contemporary with the Chronos and Rhea who ruled Crete, and that Zeus's war with the Titans took place when Abraham went to Egypt.¹⁰ Another version of the story of Abraham and Joseph then leads to a discussion of prefigurations of Jesus.¹¹ Moses was contemporary with King Inachus of Argos.¹² The story of Job prompts a discussion of theology, drawing on the teaching of John Chrysostom.¹³ Kedrenos quotes Sophocles on divine creation in relation to the father of Abraham.¹⁴ Plutarch provides him with a story

⁵ Maisano, "Note su Giorgio Cedreno," 227–48; Scott, "Narrating Justinian: From Malalas to Manasses," 2006, 37–42.

⁶ Maisano, "Note su Giorgio Cedreno."

⁷ Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Georgius Cedrenus Ioannis Scylitzae, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae* 34–35 (Bonn: Weber, 1838), 1:7.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 1.21.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 1.28–46.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 1.52–53.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 1.53–72.

¹² *Ibid.*, 1.76.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 1.77–81.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 1.82.

about the origins of the Ionians.¹⁵ The story of the Exodus is told in detail and interpreted by Chrysostom.¹⁶ After the story of Gideon, Kedrenos moves to stories of Orpheus and then to the foundation of Ilium.¹⁷ Then it is back to kings of Israel through Solomon,¹⁸ then to stories from the books of prophets.¹⁹ Kedrenos next provides excerpts from Josephus's *Jewish Antiquities* that retell some of the material he has just covered,²⁰ and launches into another theological discussion of how the meaning of the stories is perfected in Christ.²¹ Then there is another version of the history of David, Solomon, and the era of Judges up to the Babylonian conquest, and the career of Daniel.²² In these times Jason and the Argonauts made their expedition to Colchis.²³ Ganymede was captured in a battle.²⁴ Democritus and Hippocrates were contemporaries of Pelops.²⁵ Theseus's expedition to Crete leads into the story of the Trojan War, which is told in detail.²⁶ Odysseus fought men from the town of Cyclops in Sicily.²⁷ After the war Aeneas gets the Palladion back from Diomedes and goes to Italy.²⁸ After a brief description of the Roman calendar system, the story goes back to Lydia, Croesus, and Cyrus, and then follows Persian history through Artaxerxes. In these days Philip the father of Alexander ruled Macedon, and "the teachers and poets of the Greeks then were Sophocles, Herakleitos, Euripides, Herodotus, Socrates and the great Pythagoras."²⁹ Then it is back to Aeneas and Dido, the killing of the Calydonian Boar,³⁰ followed by a recap of Persian history.³¹

¹⁵ Ibid., I.82.

¹⁶ Ibid., I.83–97.

¹⁷ Ibid., I.98–104.

¹⁸ Ibid., I.105–123.

¹⁹ Ibid., I.123–130.

²⁰ Ibid., I.130–132.

²¹ Ibid., I.132–138.

²² Ibid., I.141–209.

²³ Ibid., I.209–211, I.209–249 are based on Malalas. On Malalas see Elizabeth Jeffreys et al., trans., *The Chronicle of John Malalas*, *Byzantina Australiensia* 4 (Melbourne: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1986): 86–89; Hans Thurn, ed., *Ioannis Malalae: Chronographia*, *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* 35 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2000), 163–69. I have not conducted an exhaustive comparison of Malalas and Kedrenos.

²⁴ Bekker, ed., *Georgius Cedrenus*, I.211.

²⁵ Ibid., I.213–214.

²⁶ Ibid., I.214–237.

²⁷ Ibid., I.232.

²⁸ Ibid., I.237–238.

²⁹ Ibid., I.245, based on Malalas. Jeffreys et al., *The Chronicle of John Malalas*, 85; Thurn, *Ioannis Malalae: Chronographia*, 161.

³⁰ Bekker, ed., *Georgius Cedrenus* I.245–249.

³¹ Ibid., I.249–256.

Next, Kedrenos narrates the foundation of Rome by Romulus, and the rulers of Rome through the establishment of the republic, which Kedrenos calls a democracy.³² He notes that Philip was ruling Macedon at the time of the Roman democracy, and then recounts Alexander's travels and conquests.³³ The era of Alexander's successors is identified as the time when Aesop and Anaximander flourished, and Kedrenos provides a list and description of great philosophers: Pythagoras, Thales, Empedocles, Heraclitus, Anaximander, Anaximenes, Anaxagoras, Archelaus, Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, Epicurus, Sextus, and Pyrrho.³⁴ Then Kedrenos gives information about Hellenistic rulers of Jerusalem and the Ptolemies up to Caesar's conquest of Egypt,³⁵ followed by more explanations of the Latin terms and a poem on the Seven Wonders of the World.³⁶ Thereafter, he turns to narratives about Julius Caesar, citing Plutarch,³⁷ the birth of Christ during the rule of Augustus, and career of John the Baptist under Tiberius.³⁸ He tells the story of how King Abgar of Edessa obtained a miraculous icon of Christ.³⁹ Several versions of the career of Jesus, his parents, Herod, and early apostolic activity are given along with discussions of how the Incarnation fits into cosmic history and was foretold by prophets.⁴⁰ Then come notes on the lives of apostles and evangelists.⁴¹ The text next launches into a long defense of monasticism modeled on that of George the Monk.⁴² Kedrenos then describes the apostolic work of Peter and Paul in Rome.⁴³ A narrative about the Roman destruction of Jerusalem leads to the rhetorical question: "What do you say about that, Jews?" and a long, negative interpretation of Jewish history.⁴⁴

From this point, the succession of Roman emperors provides a structure for the history. For the section from Domitian through 811, the story of the deeds of the emperors is regularly interspersed with discussions of theology

³² Ibid., 1.257–264.

³³ Ibid., 1.264–273.

³⁴ Ibid., 1.273–284.

³⁵ Ibid., 1.284–294.

³⁶ Ibid., 1.294–300. On the poem see Albrecht Berger, "Georgios Kedrenos, Konstantinos von Rhodos und die Sieben Weltwunder," *Millennium* 1 (2004): 233–42.

³⁷ Bekker, ed., *Georgius Cedrenus* 1.300–304.

³⁸ Ibid., 1.304–305.

³⁹ Ibid., 1.308–315. On this story see Ernst von Dobschütz, *Christusbilder: Untersuchungen zur christlichen Legende*, vol. 18, *Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1899).

⁴⁰ Bekker, ed., *Georgius Cedrenus* 1.316–346.

⁴¹ Ibid., 1.346–354.

⁴² Ibid., 1.355–360.

⁴³ Ibid., 1.360–374.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 1.374–428, quote on 383.

and the deeds of particular church leaders or heretics. After the discussion of the fall of Jerusalem, the narrative thread turns to Domitian and follows the Roman emperors through Severus.⁴⁵ Then there is a break for a description of the career and thought of Origen,⁴⁶ then back to emperors from Severus to Aurelianus.⁴⁷ A description of Mani and the heretical theology of Apollinarius follows,⁴⁸ and back to the emperors from Tacitus through Diocletian, along with a description of Diocletian's persecution of Christians.⁴⁹ Then the story returns to the emperors and civil wars leading up to Constantine's sole reign, and a long narration of what St. Sylvester taught Constantine about Christianity,⁵⁰ followed by a description of the Council of Nicaea and a discourse on the Trinity.⁵¹ Kedrenos then follows a chronological description of emperors and prominent bishops from Constantine through Theodosius.⁵² The career of Theodosius, particularly his conflict with Ambrose, receives longer treatment.⁵³ After briefly describing the division of the empire between the sons of Theodosius, Kedrenos lists the monuments brought to Constantinople.⁵⁴ Kedrenos then narrates the deeds of emperors and bishops from Arcadius (395–408) to Heraclius (610–641), paying particular attention to theological history.⁵⁵ The story of Heraclius's wars with the Persian Empire are told in greater detail.⁵⁶ The origins of Islam become another moment in the history of heresy, as Muhammad is described as teaching an amalgam of the errors of Judaism, Arianism, and Nestorianism.⁵⁷ The description of the Arab conquests leads to a meditation on Palestine which cites Moses and Aristotle.⁵⁸ Then the story is back to deeds of emperors and bishops with

⁴⁵ Ibid., I.428–442.

⁴⁶ Ibid., I.442–448.

⁴⁷ Ibid., I.448–455.

⁴⁸ Ibid., I.455–463.

⁴⁹ Ibid., I.463–469.

⁵⁰ Politics Ibid., I.469–478, Sylvester I.478–495.

⁵¹ Ibid., I.495–514.

⁵² Ibid., I.514–555; He discusses the last Delphi Oracle made to emperor Julian at 1.532, on which see Athanasios Markopoulos, "Kedrenos, Pseudo-Symeon, and the Last Oracle of Delphi," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 26, no. 2 (1985): 207; Timothy Gregory, "Julian and the Last Oracle at Delphi," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 24, no. 4 (1983): 355.

⁵³ Bekker, ed., *Georgius Cedrenus* I.555–562.

⁵⁴ Ibid., I.563–567.

⁵⁵ Ibid., I.567–717, The narrative becomes more detailed when dealing with Chrysostom I.576–584, and the fifth ecumenical council (553) I.659–674.

⁵⁶ Ibid., I.717–737.

⁵⁷ Ibid., I.738–744.

⁵⁸ Ibid., I.744–750.

excurses on heresies from Heraclius to Nikephoros I (802–811).⁵⁹ From here Kedrenos's history follows John Skylitzes's narrative up to 1057.⁶⁰

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

There are many manuscripts of this history, described in: Maisano, Riccardo. "Sulla tradizione manoscritta di Giorgio Cedreno." *Rivista di studi bizantini e neoellenici* 14–16 (1979): 179–201. A new edition by Luigi Tartaglia is forthcoming in the *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae*. The text was first edited and translated into Latin by Wilhelm Xylander in 1566. This edition was reprinted by Bekker in the Bonn Corpus in 1836.⁶¹ Xylander's work was again reprinted in Migne's *Patrologia Graeca* in 1864.⁶²

Translation

A team of scholars working with Roger Scott is currently undertaking a translation of Kedrenos.

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- Cameron, Averil. "Agathias and Cedrenus on Julian." *The Journal of Roman Studies* 53 (1963): 91–94.
- Gregory, Timothy. "Julian and the Last Oracle at Delphi." *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 24, no. 4 (1983): 355–66.
- Jeffreys, Elizabeth. "The Attitudes of Byzantine Chroniclers Towards Ancient History." *Byzantion* 49 (1979): 199–238.
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⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 1.750–802–2.3–43. Paulicianism is discussed at 1.756–761.

⁶⁰ John Wortley, trans., *John Skylitzes: A Synopsis of Byzantine History, 811–1057* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Hans Thurn, ed., *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis historiarum*, *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* 5 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1973); Catherine Holmes, "The Rhetorical Structures of John Skylitzes' Synopsis Historion," in *Rhetoric in Byzantium*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 187–200.

⁶¹ Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Georgius Cedrenus Ioannis Scylitzae*, *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae* 34–35 (Bonn: Weber, 1838).

⁶² Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, vol. 121–122 (Paris: Apud J.-P. Migne, 1864).

- Maisano, Riccardo. "Note su Giorgio Cedreno e la tradizione storiografica bizantina." *Rivista di studi bizantini e slavi* 3 (1983): 227–48.
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Nikephoros Bryennios

The history of Nikephoros Bryennios focuses on military events of the 1070s and the careers of Romanos Diogenes, Caesar John Doukas, Nikephoros Bryennios the Elder, and especially the young Alexios Komnenos. The manuscript is no longer extant, and the text is known from a seventeenth-century transcription and a fragment.

Nikephoros Bryennios was a significant political and literary figure of the early twelfth century. He was married to Anna Komnene, the daughter of the emperor Alexios I Komnenos (1081–1118). The Bryennios family, based in Adrianople, had made a bid for imperial power immediately prior to Alexios's accession. Nikephoros's grandfather, Nikephoros Bryennios the elder, served as *dux* of Bulgaria and governor of Dyrrachium in the 1070s.¹ In 1077, he rebelled against Michael VII (1071–1078), the same year that Nikephoros Botaneiates rebelled in the eastern provinces. Botaneiates succeeded in gaining control of Constantinople and sent his general, Alexios Komnenos, to defeat Bryennios. Alexios was successful in capturing Bryennios, who was then blinded. Botaneiates, however, allowed Bryennios to keep all of his property and gave him new titles so that the Bryennios family remained a significant power in Thrace. The marriage of the younger Nikephoros to Anna around the year 1097 can be seen as an effort to reconcile the grand families of the twelfth-century aristocracy to Alexios's rule.

At the time of Alexios's death, there may have been an unsuccessful movement to have Nikephoros become emperor instead of John II (1118–1140), although it is difficult to tell how serious these efforts were.² Niketas Choniates attributes the failure of this movement to Nikephoros's

¹ Diether Roderich Reinsch, "Der Historiker Nikephoros Bryennios, Enkel und nicht Sohn des Usurpators," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 83 (1990): 423–24.

² Leonora Neville, *Anna Komnene: The Life and Work of a Medieval Historian* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 91–152.

passivity.³ The strength of Choniates's writing is such that Nikephoros has gone down in history as a weakling because he chose not to murder his brother-in-law. Regardless of what happened, Nikephoros retained an honored position in John's court and campaigned with John. Nikephoros died after returning from John's campaign to Antioch in 1137.⁴

Nikephoros's history describes the rise of Alexios Komnenos to imperial power. In the preface Nikephoros says that he writes in response to the request of his mother-in-law, Eirene Doukaina, who wanted someone to write the history of Alexios. He asks that his history be known as merely "Material for History," or *Hyle historias*.⁵ The history is divided into four books. The first opens with a brief description of the origins of the Komnenos family in the late tenth century but moves quickly to Romanos Diogenes's (1068–1071) efforts to combat the Turkish invasions including the disastrous battle of Manzikert. Books 2, 3, and 4 provide a detailed narrative of imperial military and political history from 1071 until 1079. Nikephoros focuses on describing the deeds of Alexios Komnenos, as well as those of the Caesar John Doukas and his namesake Nikephoros Bryennios the elder. Romanos Diogenes, John Doukas, and Bryennios the elder are portrayed as true heroes whereas Alexios is subject to varying degrees of criticism. The text breaks off unfinished in the midst of a description of George Palaiologos's poor treatment at the hands of one of the Botaneiates's ministers.

Nikephoros's history copied and modified sections of the histories of Psellos and Skylitzes.⁶ Some of the information for his history seems to have come from personal recollections of other members of court. Sections narrating events in the life of Caesar John Doukas are told from John's perspective and use a more classicizing vocabulary for denoting foreigners, suggesting that perhaps Nikephoros drew on a text written by or about John Doukas.⁷ Similarly, some episodes are told from the perspective of George Palaiologos and differ in tone from Nikephoros's usual style.⁸

³ Jan Louis van Dieten, ed., *Nicetae Choniatae historia, pars prior*, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 11 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1975), 8–10.

⁴ Paul Gautier, trans. *Nicephore Bryennios Histoire; Introduction, Texte, Traduction et Notes*, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 9 (Brussels: Byzantion, 1975), 27–32. Gautier suggests either 1137 or 1138 as his date of death, but prefers the latter.

⁵ Gautier, *Nicephore Bryennios Histoire*, 73.

⁶ These passages are noted in Gautier's edition. Gautier, *Nicephore Bryennios Histoire*.

⁷ Leonora Neville, "A History of the Caesar John Doukas in Nikephoros Bryennios' Material for History?," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 32 (2008): 168–88.

⁸ Leonora Neville, *Heroes and Romans in Twelfth-Century Byzantium: The "Material for History" of Nikephoros Bryennios* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 47–49.

Nikephoros's history was preceded in its manuscript by an extremely short description of Komnenian dynastic history.⁹ The first editor of Nikephoros's history thought this was a prologue but it is now understood to be a separate work.¹⁰

The dating of the time of composition within Nikephoros's life must remain speculative. Johannes Seger argued that Books 1 and 2 were written before the death of Alexios I in 1118 because the criticism of Alexios becomes more intense in Books 3 and 4.¹¹ An indifferent, or positive, reception of the veiled criticism of Alexios in Books 1 and 2 at John II's court also may have emboldened Nikephoros to continue more critically.¹² It is also possible that the whole text was written while Alexios was alive and the negative comparison between Alexios and Nikephoros Bryennios the elder was part of an argument that Nikephoros should succeed instead of John II.

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

The only manuscript of Nikephoros Bryennios's history was lost in the eighteenth century. All editions of the text are based on a transcription made by Pierre Poussines in the middle of the seventeenth century. The lost manuscript, which scholars have termed *Tolosanus*, also contained an excellent complete copy of Anna Komnene's *Alexiad*. A brief selection from Book 1 of Nikephoros's history, in which he describes the origins of the Turks, is preserved in *Marcianus graecus 509*, a fifteenth-century Venetian manuscript.¹³

Editions

Gautier, Paul, ed. *Nicephore Bryennios Histoire; Introduction, Texte, Traduction et Notes*. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 9. Brussels: Byzantion, 1975.

⁹ Gautier, *Nicephore Bryennios Histoire*, 54–70.

¹⁰ Johannes Seger, *Nikephoros Bryennios: Eine philologisch-historische Untersuchung* (Munich: J. Lindauersche Buchhandlung, 1888), 100–1. Gautier, *Nicephore Bryennios Histoire*, 48.

¹¹ Seger, *Nikephoros Bryennios*, 32–33.

¹² Neville, *Heroes and Romans*, 173–78.

¹³ Gautier, *Nicephore Bryennios Histoire*, 27–32; Albert Failler, "Le texte de l'histoire de Nicéphore Bryennios à la lumière d'un nouveau fragment," *Revue des études Byzantines* 47 (1989): 239–50.

Publication History

The first edition of Bryennios was published with the Paris Corpus in 1661 by Pierre Poussines.¹⁴ This edition was reprinted in 1729 in the Venice Corpus.¹⁵ Meineke oversaw a further edition with only small modifications, which appeared in the Bonn Corpus in 1836.¹⁶ The Poussines edition was reprinted in the *Patrologia Graeca* in 1864.¹⁷

*Translations**English*

Peter Bell is preparing an English translation for the Translated Texts for Byzantinists series published by Liverpool University Press.

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Starting Point

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¹⁴ Pierre Poussines, ed., *Nicephori Caesaris Bryennii Commentarii de Rebus Byzantinis*, Corpus Byzantinae Historiae (Paris: Ex Typographia Regia, 1661).

¹⁵ Pierre Poussines, ed., *Yle Istorias Nicephori Caesaris Bryennii* (Venice: Ex Typographia Bartholomaei Javarina, 1729).

¹⁶ August Meineke, ed., *Ioannes Cinnamus. Nicephorus Bryennius*, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 26 (Bonn: Weber, 1836).

¹⁷ Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, vol. 127 (Paris: Apud J.-P. Migne, 1864).

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Anna Komnene

Anna Komnene's *Alexiad* is one of the masterpieces of Byzantine historiography. It is a long and detailed history of the reign of emperor Alexios Komnenos (1081–1118), written by his daughter in the middle of the twelfth century. The *Alexiad* is written in artful classicizing Attic Greek. Anna's history creates a glowing portrait of Alexios as a great hero, ultimately arguing that he should be considered the greatest Roman emperor ever.¹

The *Alexiad* is organized into fifteen substantial books. Anna's coverage of events is uneven, with more detail given to the earlier parts of Alexios's long reign. The two Norman invasions of the empire at Dyrrachium, first by Robert Guiscard in 1081 and then his son Bohemond in 1108, are treated in great detail and create a strong narrative structure for the whole work. The final ten years of Alexios's career, after his defeat of Bohemond, are treated with comparative brevity. Anna also describes Alexios's wars against Cumans, Pechenegs, and Turks, but gives greater emphasis to his conflicts with western Europeans. Anna occasionally places her discussions of events where they suit the arc of her narrative rather than in strict chronological order. For instance, the trial of Basil for the Bogomil heresy is thought to have taken place before 1104, but in her text it is placed immediately prior to Alexios's death in 1118. This change to the chronology of the heresy trial highlights Alexios's concern for proper orthodoxy as the history is coming to a close.

Anna appears to have played with the conventions of classicizing history writing to make her *Alexiad* more like a heroic epic. The title, *Alexiad*, recalls Homer's *Iliad*. Anna frequently uses similes and Homeric vocabulary in her writing. Her characterization of Alexios as a wily helmsman, skillfully steering the ship of state through a sea of constant storms, endlessly

¹ Penelope Buckley, *The Alexiad of Anna Komnene: Artistic Strategy in the Making of a Myth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Edgar Robert Ashton Sewter and Peter Frankopan, trans., *The Alexiad*, Revised (London: Penguin Classics, 2004), 419.

buffeted by crashing waves of disaster, draws on imagery from Homer's *Odyssey*.² The *Alexiad* is far more a history of Alexios's own deeds and trials, than a history of the empire.³ Anna also departs from generic conventions in presenting herself as mourning deeply for Alexios, her mother, and her husband in both the prologue and the ending of her history. Anna was especially influenced by the style of Michael Psellos and quotes his *Chronographia* often.⁴

Most of the *Alexiad* is standard classicizing history, and Anna's narrative is much like that of any historian writing in Attic Greek. In some sections however, she becomes excessively emotional, calling attention to her own loneliness and her mourning for her husband and parents. Neville argues that these departures from the standard masculine discourse of Greek history writing are strategies by which Anna tries to appear to her audience as both a good woman and a good historian. They show her acting as a natural (emotional) woman, and displaying her ability to eventually control her emotions to write dispassionately. Her self-presentation as a mourning widow may have been intended to humble herself, and gain the pity and goodwill of her audience, who otherwise – given twelfth-century ideas of proper female behavior – would be affronted by the arrogance of a woman trying to write history. The intense dislike of women grasping after power in Byzantine culture may also have prompted Anna to present herself as disempowered.⁵

The *Alexiad* seems to reflect the politics of the reign of Manuel I (1143–1180). Anna's criticism of Western Europeans in the *Alexiad* has been interpreted as a critique of Manuel's pro-Latin policies. In particular, some discussions seem to reflect events of the passage of the Second Crusade in 1147.⁶ This would place the composition of the *Alexiad* in the late 1140s or early 1150s, before Anna's death at some point in that decade.

² Ruth J. Macrides, "The Pen and the Sword: Who Wrote the *Alexiad*?" in *Anna Komnene and Her Times*, ed. Thalia Gouma-Peterson (New York: Garland, 2000), 67–68.

³ Buckley, *The Alexiad of Anna Komnene*.

⁴ See the Index Locorum of Diether R. Reinsch and Athanasios Kamybilis, eds., *Alexiad* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2001).

⁵ Neville, *Anna Komnene*, 15–88.

⁶ Paul Magdalino, "The Pen of the Aunt: Echoes of the Mid-Twelfth Century in the *Alexiad*," in *Anna Komnene and Her Times*, ed. Thalia Gouma-Peterson (New York: Garland, 2000) 15–44; Paul Stephenson, "Anna Komnene's *Alexiad* as a Source for the Second Crusade?," *Journal of Medieval History* 29, no. 1 (2003): 41–54; R. D. Thomas, "Anna Komnene's Account of the First Crusade: History and Politics in the Reigns of the Emperors Alexios I and Manuel I Komnenos," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 15 (1991): 269–312; John France, "Anna Komnene, the *Alexiad* and the First Crusade," *Reading Medieval Studies* 10 (1984): 20–38.

James Howard-Johnston has argued that Anna should be seen as an editor of a text composed largely by her husband, rather than as the author of her own historical text, on the grounds that as a woman she would not have the interest or experience necessary to write about battles.⁷ Anna wrote in her preface that she was continuing the history of Alexios begun by her husband Nikephoros Bryennios which ends, unfinished, shortly before Alexios's coup. Other scholars have not been persuaded by this argument for a variety of reasons, including that both Anna and Nikephoros learned to write about battle by reading ancient histories and that Howard-Johnston's argument is essentially grounded in assumptions about what sort of writing would interest a woman.⁸

In addition to the *Alexiad*, sources for understanding Anna's life include a long funeral oration by George Tornikes, the charter for her mother's monastery, the preface to her will, occasional mentions in various orations and letters.⁹ She is mentioned briefly in the history of Zonaras and discussed more extensively in that of Choniates.¹⁰

Anna Komnene was born in Constantinople on December 2, 1083. The oldest of five sisters and four brothers, Anna was the child of emperor Alexios Komnenos and Irene Doukaina. She was betrothed to Constantine, the son of Michael VII and Maria of Alania, but the betrothal was dissolved

⁷ James Howard-Johnston, "Anna Komnene and the Alexiad," in *Alexios I Komnenos*, ed. Margaret Mullett and Dion Smythe (Belfast: Belfast Byzantine Enterprises, 1996), 260–302; James Howard-Johnston, *Historical Writing in Byzantium*, Kieler Felix-Jacoby-Vorlesungen 1 (Heidelberg: Verlag Antike, 2014), 31–39.

⁸ Jakov Ljubarskij, "Why Is the Alexiad a Masterpiece of Byzantine Literature?," in *Leimon: Studies Presented to Lennart Rydén on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. Jan Olof Rosenqvist (Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 1996), 127–41; Macrides, "The Pen and the Sword," 63–82; Neville, *Heroes and Romans in Twelfth-Century Byzantium: The "Material for History" of Nikephoros Bryennios*, 182–93; Diether Roderich Reinsch, "Women's Literature in Byzantium? The Case of Anna Komnene," in *Anna Komnene and Her Times*, ed. Thalia Gouma-Peterson (New York: Garland, 2000), 83–105.

⁹ Jean Darrouzès, *George et Démétrios Tornikès. Lettres et Discours* (Paris: Editions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1970); Paul Gautier, "Le typikon de la Théotokos Kécharitôméné," *Revue des études byzantines* 43, no. 1 (1985): 5–16; Stratis Papaioannou, "Anna Komnene's Will," in *Byzantine Religious Culture: Studies in Honor of Alice-Mary Talbot*, ed. Denis Sullivan, Elizabeth Fisher, and Stratis Papaioannou (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 99–124; Paul Gautier, ed., "Theodoros Prodromos: Epitaphius in Theodoram nurum Bryennii," in *Nicéphore Bryennios. Histoire* (Brussels: Byzantion, 1975), 355–67; Paul Gautier, ed., "Theodore Prodromos: Epithalamium fortunatissimis caesaris filii," in *Nicéphore Bryennios. Histoire* (Brussels: Byzantion, 1975), 341–55; Paul Gautier, ed., *Lettres et Discours: Michel Italikos* (Paris: Institut français d'études byzantines, 1972); Wolfram Hörandner, *Theodoros Prodromos, Historische Gedichte*, Wiener Byzantinistische Studien 11 (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1974); E. Kurtz, "Evsťafia Fessalonikiškago i Konstantina Manassi monodii na konchinu Nikifora Komnina," *Vizantiiskii Vremennik* 16 (1922): 283–322.

¹⁰ Theodore Büttner-Wobst, ed., *Ioannis Zonarae epitomae historiarum libri xviii*, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 44–45 (Bonn: Weber, 1897), 3:754; Jan van Dieten, ed., *Nicetae Choniatae historia, pars prior*, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae II (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1975), 8–11.

either by Constantine's death, soon after 1094, or because of his mother's involvement in a conspiracy against Alexios.¹¹ In 1097 Anna married Nikephoros Bryennios, the grandson of the rebel of the same name who was defeated by Alexios and blinded in 1078.¹² Anna and Nikephoros had six children that we know of: Alexios, John, Andronikos, Constantine, Irene, and Marie. Of those, Marie, Constantine, and Andronikos appear to have predeceased their mother.¹³

Anna Komnene was an influential patron of commentaries on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*.¹⁴ According to Tornikes's funeral oration, she participated in numerous discussions of ancient philosophy but never wavered from the tenets of Orthodox Christianity. Tornikes also credits her with profound study of ancient drama, comedy, mathematics, and medicine. He says that her letters were models of epistolary art and circulated widely.¹⁵ In addition to the *Alexiad* she wrote poems, two of which survive, and the preface to her will.¹⁶

It is widely believed that Anna was responsible for an effort to have her husband Nikephoros Bryennios succeed Alexios in 1118 rather than her brother John.¹⁷ The story that Anna wanted to seize power is first mentioned Choniates's history.¹⁸ Neville contends that modern historians have

¹¹ Lynda Garland and Stephen Rapp, "Mary 'of Alania': Woman and Empress Between Worlds," in *Byzantine Women: Varieties of Experience, 800–1200*, ed. Lynda Garland (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 110–11.

¹² Diether Roderich Reinsch, "Der Historiker Nikephoros Bryennios, Enkel und nicht Sohn des Usurpators," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 83, no. 2 (1990): 423–24.

¹³ Matoula Kouroupou and Jean-François Vannier, "Commémorations des Commènes dans le typikon liturgique du monastère du Christ Philanthrope (ms. Panaghia Kamariotissa 29)," *Revue des études Byzantines* 63, no. 1 (2005): 41–69.

¹⁴ Anthony Kaldellis, "Classical Scholarship in Twelfth-Century Byzantium," in *Medieval Greek Commentaries on the Nicomachean Ethics*, ed. Charles Barber and David Jenkins (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 1–43; Michele Trizio, *Il Neoplatonismo di Eustrazio di Nicea*, Biblioteca Filosofica di Quaestio 23 (Bari: Pagina soc. coop., 2016); Jean Darrouzès, *George et Démétrios Tornikès. Lettres et Discours* (Paris: Editions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1970), 283.

¹⁵ Darrouzès, *Tornikès*, 301–3.

¹⁶ Stratis Papaioannou, "Anna Komnene's Will," in *Byzantine Religious Culture: Studies in Honor of Alice-Mary Talbot*, ed. Denis Sullivan, Elizabeth Fisher, and Stratis Papaioannou (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 99–124; Josephus Nicolaus Sola, "De Codice Laurentiano X Plutei V," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 20 (1911): 373–83. A third poem is possibly by Anna: Anneliese Paul, "Dichtung auf Objekten. Inschriftlich erhaltene griechische Epigramme vom 9. bis zum 16. Jahrhundert: Suche nach bekannten Autornamen," in *Byzantinische Sprachkunst: Studien zur byzantinischen Literatur gewidmet Wolfram Hörandner zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Martin Hinterberger and Elisabeth Schiffer (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2007), 250.

¹⁷ Warren T. Treadgold, *A History of the Byzantine State and Society* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 629; Timothy E. Gregory, *A History of Byzantium* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 302; Michael Angold, *The Byzantine Empire, 1025–1204: A Political History* (London: Longman, 1997), 181–83.

¹⁸ van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae historia*, 10–12.

given Anna a larger role in their narratives of an attempted coup than is justified by the medieval evidence because that story helps to explain the exaggerated emotionalism of Anna's self-presentation in the *Alexiad*. Although Anna expresses anguish at the loss of her husband and parents, scholars have interpreted her as distraught because she did not succeed at becoming empress, thus taking the strength of emotion at face value but distrusting its ostensible causes. Yet as a skilled rhetorician, Anna did not express emotion in her text simply because she could not help it. Rather, her emotional displays were designed to elicit particular feelings among the audience, and hence they do not need to be explained by politics. Neville disputes the veracity of Choniates's narrative on a number of grounds and points out that he inverts the political meanings of the histories written by Nikephoros Bryennios and Anna Komnene.¹⁹

Anna owned two sets of apartments in the precinct of her mother's monastery, Kecharitomene. Modern scholars have supposed that Anna was forced to retire there after her supposed attempt to seize the throne, but residence in the royal apartments is clearly distinguished from monastic practice in the Kecharitomene charter and no medieval source suggests that Anna was forced to live there.²⁰ The exact date of Anna's death is unknown.

To help readers get a sense of the basic structure and pacing of the *Alexiad*, the following is a rough guide to the major topics of each book. It does *not* include all significant events discussed in the *Alexiad*:

- Book 1: Alexios's deeds in service of Michael VII (1071–1078) and Nikephoros Botaneiates (1078–1081); The preparations of the Norman leader Robert Guiscard for his invasion of the empire in 1081
- Book 2: the revolt of the Komnenoi family that brought Alexios to power in May 1081
- Book 3: the establishment of Alexios's government, especially the authority he gave to his mother Anna Dalassene; the poor state of the empire at the time of his accession
- Book 4: the Norman invasion of Robert Guiscard and Bohemond; their conquest of Dyrrachium
- Book 5: Alexios's efforts to defeat Bohemond; heresy trial of John Italos
- Book 6: fighting against Bohemond; birth of Anna Komnene (1083); Turkish attacks and politics in Asia Minor; Scythian invasion

¹⁹ Neville, *Anna Komnene*, 91–174.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 133–40.

- Book 7: invasion of Scythians (Cumans and Pechenegs, dated to 1087); fighting against Scythians; fighting against Turks
- Book 8: campaign against Scythians; Alexios's victory over Pechenegs at Levounion (1091); conspiracy against Alexios
- Book 9: fighting against Turks; the career and conspiracies of Nikephoros Diogenes
- Book 10: heresy trial of Nilos; fighting against Cumans; arrival of the Crusaders and their negotiations with Alexios
- Book 11: events of the First Crusade; establishment of Latin principalities in east
- Book 12: Bohemond's invasion and siege of Dyrrachium
- Book 13: Alexios's successful campaign against Bohemond (1108)
- Book 14: fighting against Turks; digression on Anna's sources and methods; Alexios's efforts to convert Manichaeans
- Book 15: fighting against Turks; Alexios helps settle refugees, builds an orphanage; dogmatic fights against Bogomil heresy; Alexios's illness and death

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

There are a number of manuscripts, nearly all incomplete to some extent. The earliest manuscript, *Florentinus Laurentianus* 70.2, is from the twelfth century. It starts at Prologue 4.3, ends at Book 14.8.1, and omits Book 11, Chapter 11.7 to Book 12, Chapter 6. The fourteenth-century manuscript *Parisinus Coislinianus* 311 starts with Book 1, Chapter 16.1. Another fourteenth-century manuscript, *Vaticanus Graecus* 981, contains the whole Prologue and an epitome of the text to Book 15.7. A brief selection of the Prologue (Chapter 1, paragraph 1, lines 2–15) is in *Parisinus Graecus* 400 written in 1343/44. Six early modern manuscripts made between 1565 and the eighteenth century also survive.²¹

Edition

Reinsch, Diether, and Athanasios Kambylis, eds. *Alexiad.* Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 40, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2001.

²¹ Diether Reinsch and Athanasios Kambylis, eds., *Alexiad.* Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 40, (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2001), 13–28.

Publication History

The *Alexiad* was published by Pierre Possines in the Paris Corpus in 1649.²² This version was reprinted in the Venice Corpus in 1729, and Migne's *Patrologia Graeca* in 1864.²³ Under the editorship of Schopen and Reifferscheid, the Bonn Corpus produced a new edition whose two parts appeared in 1838 and 1878.²⁴ Reifferscheid then introduced his own full edition in 1884.²⁵ Bernard Leib's edition was published in Paris in 1937–1945 and reprinted in 1967 and 2009.²⁶

*Translations**English*

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²² Pierre Poussines, ed., *Annae Comnenae porphyrogenitae caesarissae Alexias, sive De rebus ab Alexio imperatore vel eius tempore gestis, libri quindecim* (Paris: Ex Typographia Regia, 1649).

²³ Jacques-Paul Migne, *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, vol. 131 (Paris: Apud J.-P. Migne, 1864).

²⁴ Ludwig Schopen and August Reifferscheid, eds., *Annae Comnenae Alexiadis libri XV*, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 39–40 (Bonn: Weber, 1838 and 1878).

²⁵ August Reifferscheid, ed., *Annae Comnenae Porphyrogenitae Alexias*, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1884).

²⁶ Bernard Leib, ed., *Anne Comnène, Alexiade*. 3 vols. (Paris: Société d'édition "Les Belles Lettres," 1937–1945). Reprinted 1967 and 2009.

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John Kinnamos

The thirteenth-century manuscript *Vaticanus Graecus 163* contains a history attributed to John Kinnamos covering the years 1118–1176. The *History* covers the reigns of John II and Manuel I, and depicts both rulers favorably, especially Manuel.¹ In the manuscript, the text is divided into two books. In modern editions, it is typically presented in four or seven books.²

This text focuses on the lives of the emperors and their military affairs. It describes John II's war against the Hungarians and the Turks, and his death after a hunting accident. The *History* then follows the accession of John's favored younger son Manuel, Manuel's recapture of Antioch in 1144, plots against him, his conflicts with the Turks, the events of the Second Crusade, and Manuel's further military campaigns in both east and west, including in Egypt and Italy. With the exception of Louis VII, the text depicts the crusaders, and Latins in general, in a consistently unfavorable light.³ It also describes a theological dispute in the 1160s regarding the relationship between Father and Son in the Trinity.

Kinnamos does not provide precise dating for events, but seems to follow chronological order.⁴ His writing is less elaborate than that of some elite Byzantine rhetoricians of the twelfth century. Kinnamos's source base remains unclear. He may have drawn on his own experiences in the court and on campaign, as well as oral accounts, encomia, and possibly a variety of written documents.⁵

¹ Charles M. Brand, ed., *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 1; Carl Neumann, *Griechische Geschichtsschreiber und Geschichtsquellen im zwölften Jahrhundert: Studien zu Anna Comnena, Thod. Prodrōmos, Joh. Cinnamus* (Leipzig: Verlag von Duncker und Humblot, 1888), 79–80, 100–1.

² Brand, ed., *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, 11, note 52.

³ On Kinnamos's treatment of the crusaders, see Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, 4.

⁴ Neumann, *Griechische Geschichtsschreiber*, 85–88; Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, 9–10.

⁵ Paul Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143–1180* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 21; Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, 5–6; Neumann, *Griechische Geschichtsschreiber*, 89–90.

The manuscript ends with events in 1176, four years before the end of Manuel's reign.⁶ It breaks off in mid-sentence, and Kinnamos may not have finished the work. Since the author frequently makes allusions to passages that never materialize, Carl Neumann argued that the surviving manuscript is an abridged version, whose copyist overleapt certain sections.⁷ Vasile Grecu and Charles Brand have made the case that the manuscript preserved the original version. Pointing to the sometimes unpolished prose and other textual features, they believe Kinnamos simply never revised his work, and may have left it unfinished. The preface to the *History* written by Niketas Choniates claims that no author had yet taken up the task of writing about Manuel, indicating that Kinnamos's book was not formally published. Choniates, however, seems to have used Kinnamos as a source, and so he may have considered it an unpublished draft, or just ignored it in his preface.⁸

Kinnamos's history is the main source of information about his life. He indicates that he was born sometime after 1143, the date of Emperor John II's death.⁹ Kinnamos also wrote a rhetorical exercise.¹⁰ The title of the history calls him an imperial secretary and he seems to have spent his adult life as a mid-level official in the court of Manuel I Komnenos (1143–1180). He accompanied Manuel I on campaign, including at the siege of Zeugminon in 1165 and possibly the battle of Myriokephalon in 1176. Kinnamos is mentioned in the history of Niketas Choniates as debating theology in 1184 before Andronikos Komnenos (1183–1185). Sometime after 1185, Kinnamos is known to have composed an address to one of the emperors who succeeded Andronikos. The date of Kinnamos's death is unknown.¹¹

The precise date of composition of the *History* is unknown. Carl Neumann argued that it was mainly written during the time of Emperor Manuel, while Karl Krumbacher suggested a date after 1185 and Gyula

⁶ Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, 1.

⁷ Neumann, *Griechische Geschichtsschreiber*, 80–84. His opinion was shared by Karl Krumbacher, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur von Justinian bis zum Ende des oströmischen Reiches (527–1453)*, Handbuch der klassischen Altertums-Wissenschaft 9.1 (Munich: Beck, 1897): 279–80.

⁸ Vasile Grecu, "Nicéas Choniates a-t-il connu l'histoire de Jean Cinnamos?" *Revue des études Byzantines* 7, no. 1 (1949): 202–3; Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, 10–11.

⁹ Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, 2; Neumann, *Griechische Geschichtsschreiber*, 93.

¹⁰ Edition and Hungarian translation of the exercise, an *ethopoeia*: György Bánhegyi, ed., *Kinnamos Ethopoiája = Cinnami Ethopoeia* (Budapest: Kir. M. Pazmany Péter Tudományegyetemi Görög Filológiai intézet, 1943).

¹¹ Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, 3–5; Neumann, *Griechische Geschichtsschreiber*, 93–94.

Moravcsik has preferred a date between 1180 and 1183.¹² Charles Brand has argued for a date between 1180–1182 based on Kinnamos’s use of present tense to describe key figures during this time and his reference to “the present favorable opportunity” for writing. Brand interprets this statement as an allusion to a possible period of forced retirement under the regents for Alexios II (1180–1183).¹³

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

A single thirteenth-century manuscript of Kinnamos – *Vaticanus Graecus 163* (folios 221r–268v) – has survived. It is known to have been in Constantinople in 1453. One copy of the manuscript was made in the sixteenth century and three in the seventeenth century.¹⁴

Edition

A new edition is being prepared by Raimondo Tocci for the *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae*.

Publication History

The text was first edited and published by Cornelius Tollius in Utrecht in 1652.¹⁵ Charles du Fresne DuCange made a new edition and Latin translation for the Paris Corpus, published in 1670. This was reprinted in Venice in 1729. DuCange’s edition was republished with some revisions by Meineke for the Bonn Corpus.¹⁶ Meineke’s version was reprinted by Migne as *Patrologia Graeca* vol. 133.¹⁷

¹² Neumann, *Griechische Geschichtsschreiber*, 99–100; Krumbacher, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur*, 279; Gyula Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica 1. Die byzantinischen Quellen der Geschichte der Türkvölker*, Berliner byzantinistische Arbeiten 10 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1958), 325.

¹³ Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, 4–5, especially note 18.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, II, note 52; Neumann, *Griechische Geschichtsschreiber*, 83; Gyula Moravcsik, *Studia Byzantina* (Amsterdam: A.M. Hakkert, 1967), 293–96.

¹⁵ Cornelius Tollius, ed., *De Rebus Gestis Imperat. Constantinop. Ioannis & Manuelis, Comnenorum Historiar. Libri IV* (Utrecht: Typis Theodori ab Ackersdyck, 1652).

¹⁶ August Meineke, ed., *Ioannis Cinnami epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum*, *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae* 26 (Bonn: Weber, 1836).

¹⁷ Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, vol. 133 (Paris: Apud J.-P. Migne, 1864). On the publication history, see Brand, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, II.

Translations

English

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French

Rosenblum, Jacqueline, trans. *Johannes Cinnamus: Chronique*. Publications de la faculté des lettres et des sciences humaines de Nice 10. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1972.

Russian (Partial)

Pashuto, Vladimir Terent'evich, ed. *Vizantiiskii istorik Ioann Kinnam o Rusi i narodakh Vostochnoi Evropy: teksty, perevod, kommentarii*. Translated by M. V. Bibikov. Vizantiiskie istoricheskie sochineniia. Moscow: Ladomir, 1997.

Turkish

Demirkent, Işın, ed. *Ioannes Kinnamos'un Historia'si (1118–1176)*. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2001.

Starting Points

Brand, Charles M., trans. *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1976.

Magdalino, Paul. *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143–1180*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993. Especially relevant are pages 18–21.

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Dabrowska, Malgorzata. "Die Herrschaft des Kaisers Manuel I. Komnenos in den Augen von Johannes Kinnamos." In *Macht und Spiegel der Macht. Herrschaft in Europa im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert vor dem Hintergrund der Chronistik*, edited by Norbert Kersken and Grischa Vercamer, 419–31. Quellen und Studien 27. Wiesbaden: Deutsches historisches Institut Warschau, 2013.

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John Zonaras

This is an extensive history from Creation to 1118. Although it starts with Creation, it does not have most of the features associated with the Byzantine chronicle tradition. It uses classical Greek and is relatively secular in outlook. It almost entirely consists of shortened summaries of classical histories. The text draws extensively on the texts of Josephus and Cassius Dio.

Zonaras's text begins with Creation and ends with the death of Alexios Komnenos in 1118. Aside from beginning with Creation, this secular and classicizing text does not conform to the tradition of chronicle writing. DuCange divided the *Epitomē Istorion* into eighteen roughly equal books for his 1686 edition. In one of the manuscripts (*Parisiensis Regius* 1715) a marginal note at the beginning of Book 9 provides a title "The Historical Epitome selected and written by the monk John Zonaras. The earlier book had the Hebrew and Roman matters and the consuls. This book is the history of the emperors."¹

Because of Zonaras's close use of classical texts, the study of his sources is well advanced.² While Zonaras paraphrased his source texts more often than copying directly, he stayed close enough to the original that we can usually tell which classical text he was using. His history has been used to reconstruct lost books of Cassius Dio's history. Zonaras's discussion of Creation and biblical history mostly summarizes Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities* and the *Jewish War*. He expands Josephus's treatment of Daniel to include material from the *Book of Daniel* and Theodoret's commentary on Daniel's prophecies.³ He inserts an epitome of Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* into

¹ Ludwig August Dindorf, ed., *Ioannis Zonarae epitome historiarum* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1868), 2.340.

² Wilhelm Schmidt, "Über die Quellen des Zonaras," *Zeitschrift für die Alterthumswissenschaft*, 1839, 238–85. Ursulus Boissevain, "Zonaras' Quelle für die Römische Kaisergeschichte von Nerva bis Severus Alexander," *Hermes* 26, no. 3 (1891): 440–52; Edwin Patzig, "Über einige Quellen des Zonaras.," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 5, no. 1 (1896): 24–53.

³ ed. Dindorf I.180–224. He also draws on Tobit & Judith.

his history of Cyrus in Book 3.⁴ He employs Plutarch's *Life of Alexander* in Book 4.⁵ Book 7, on early Roman history, uses Plutarch's lives of *Romulus*, *Numa*, *Publicola*, *Camillus*, and Cassius Dio. Books 8 and 9 are selected from Dio. Book 10, which begins the story of the emperors, uses Plutarch's *Pompeii*, *Caesar*, Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History*, and Dio. Books 11 and 12, covering history from Tiberius to Maximianus, use Eusebius, Dio, and Xiphilinos's epitome of Dio. For the fourth through eleventh centuries, Zonaras seems to draw on Malalas, Prokopios, Theophanes, George the Monk, Psellos, Attaleiates, Skylitzes, and Scylitzes Continuatus.⁶ His account of Alexios Komnenos appears to be based on original research or personal knowledge.

Zonaras pays significant attention to the Republican period of Roman history. Zonaras is one of the more widely read works of Byzantine history among modern scholars because he incorporated extensive sections of Dio Cassius's *Roman History* which do not otherwise survive. He is interested in the changing forms of Roman government, explicitly describing the turn from Republic to empire as a decline. Zonaras traces the history of the Roman state, carefully charting the changes in its governmental structures. This study of Roman constitutionalism provides the framework for his criticism of more contemporaneous rulers. Zonaras is particularly critical of Alexios Komnenos, complaining that Alexios considered himself to be the owner rather than the steward of the state.⁷ Macrides sees a connection between Zonaras's descriptions of Alexios and those of the tyrant Tarquin, the last king before the Roman Republic.⁸

Zonaras was a twelfth-century judge and author of histories, hagiographies, and commentaries on canon law. He held the title of *droungarios tes vigles*, which made him head of the civil courts in Constantinople, and served as *protasekretis* in the imperial chancellery. Zonaras's own writings provide all of our information about his life and career.⁹

There is an unusually large range of possible dates for the composition of this text, anywhere from 1118 up to the late twelfth century. The dating is

⁴ ed. Dindorf 1.224–261.

⁵ ed. Dindorf 1.284–297.

⁶ Apostolos D. Karpozilos, *Vyzantinoi historikoi kai chronographoi*, vol. 3 (Athens: Kanakē, 2009), 473–75.

⁷ Theodore Büttner-Wobst, ed., *Ioannis Zonarae epitomae historiarum*, vol. 3, *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae* 45 (Bonn: Weber, 1897), 766.

⁸ Ruth Macrides and Paul Magdalino, "The Fourth Kingdom and the Rhetoric of Hellenism," in *The Perception of the Past in Twelfth-Century Europe*, ed. Paul Magdalino (London: The Hambledon Press, 1992), 127–31.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 127.

of particular interest because it would be helpful to know whether Zonaras wrote this history before or after Anna Komnene wrote the *Alexiad*. Zonaras's history described the death of Alexios Komnenos, and so must have been written after 1118. Some scholars believe that Zonaras's critical depiction of John's behavior at the death of Alexios indicates that John had died before Zonaras wrote.¹⁰ This is plausible but not conclusive. The history was cited explicitly by Michael Glykas, which means it must have been finished before Glykas wrote. We do not have a firm date for Glykas, however, except that he was still active in the last quarter of the twelfth century. As such, a date range of 1120–1180 seems to be when Zonaras could have been writing the history.

In the preface to his history Zonaras explains that he was writing in retirement. His place of retirement has been identified as the monastery of Hagia Glykeria in the Sea of Marmara.¹¹ Zonaras's description of his retirement led some scholars to think he had been forcibly exiled, possibly due, they suggested, to his participation in Anna Komnene's supposed coup attempt in 1118. Based on this assumption, these scholars have set his judicial career in the reign of Alexios Komnenos (1081–1118).¹² Yet retirement does not necessarily indicate political exile, and there is no evidence connecting Zonaras with either Anna Komnene or the tension at John's accession.

The only fixed date we have for Zonaras comes from his commentary on the canons of the council of Neokaisareia. In that text, he mentions observing an emperor who had been married twice. Assuming this is not a later interpolation,¹³ this could mean that he was either writing after the second marriage of Nikephoros III Botaneiates to Maria of Alania in

¹⁰ Karpozilos, *Vyzantinoi historikoi kai chronographoi*, 2009, 3:467. Treadgold, *The Middle Byzantine Historians*, 389–90.

¹¹ One of the manuscripts of the history, *Ambrosianus Graecus* 411, calls Zonaras a monk at St. Glykeria. Max Heinemann, *Quaestiones Zonarae, Particula I* (Dresden: Teubner, 1895), 13–14; Christos Stavrakos, "Zonaras, Ioannes," in *The Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, ed. Graeme Dunphy, vol. 2 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 1544.

¹² Max Heinemann, *Quaestiones Zonarae, Particula I* (Dresden: Teubner, 1895); Konrat Ziegler, "Zonaras," in *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, vol. 19, Second Series, 1972, 718–23. Christos Stavrakos, "Zonaras, Ioannes," *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*. Brill Online, 2013. www.referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopedia-of-the-medieval-chronicle/zonaras-ioannes-SIM_01427.

¹³ Banchich and Lane think it is likely to be an interpolation. Treadgold considers their supposition, "arbitrary and unlikely." Thomas Banchich and Eugene Lane, *The History of Zonaras: From Alexander Severus to the Death of Theodosius the Great*, Routledge Classical Translations (London: Routledge, 2009), 6–7; Treadgold, *The Middle Byzantine Historians*, 389; Georgios Rhalles and Michael Potles, eds., *Synagma tōn theiōn kai ierōn kanonōn*, (Athens: Chartophylakos, 1852), 3:80.

1078,¹⁴ or after that of Manuel Komnenos in 1161.¹⁵ In his history, Zonaras condemns Botaneiates's marriage as adulterous because Maria's first husband was still alive.¹⁶ Nikephoros Bryennios also records that this was Botaneiates's *third* marriage.¹⁷ Since the scandal Zonaras was complaining about in the canon commentary was a second marriage, it may be more likely that the reference is to Manuel.

Zonaras writes in the preface to his commentary on the canons that he was "summoned" to take up the work.¹⁸ Some scholars interpret this as an imperial commission.¹⁹ Because the history was ostensibly written in monastic retirement, when Zonaras says he had become lazy, the supposition has been that he wrote the commentaries while working as a jurist in the imperial court and the history after his secular career had ended. This has made some scholars reluctant to see Zonaras as referring to Manuel's marriage in 1161: if he were still at court in the 1160s, he would not have had enough time to retire, get slothful, and then pluck up to write history in time for it to be finished for Glykas to use.²⁰ Yet, the assumption that the history was written after the commentaries may not be warranted. Nothing in the commentaries explicitly claims that it was an imperial commission, and the summons to write may have come from anyone, lay or monastic. Byzantine courtiers have been known to come out of monastic retirement, so even if we take all of Zonaras's statements of self-portrayal at face value, he may have written the history first. Zonaras's history is remarkably secular in outlook and cannot be seen as expressing a particularly monastic perspective.²¹ Depicting the place of composition as a lonely retreat, far from the center of power, was also a way to substantiate the impartiality of the author and hence the reliability of the history. This depiction may

¹⁴ This is preferred by Banchich and Lane, *The History of Zonaras*, 7.

¹⁵ Ruth Macrides, "The Pen and the Sword: Who Wrote the Alexiad?" in *Anna Komnene and Her Times*, ed. Thalia Gouma-Peterson (New York: Garland, 2000), 73. Külzer considers Zonaras to have died well after 1160, presumably taking the reference as to Manuel. Andreas Külzer, "Die Anfänge der Geschichte: Zur Darstellung des 'Biblischen Zeitalters' in der byzantinischen Chronistik," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 93, no. 1 (2000): 150.

¹⁶ Theodore Büttner-Wobst, ed., *Ioannis Zonarae epitomae historiarum*, vol. 3, *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae* 45 (Bonn: Weber, 1897), 722–23. This was also noted in Skylitzes Continuatus: Eudoxos Tsolakēs, ed., *Skylitzes Continuatus* (Thessaloniki: Étaireia Makedonikon Spoudōn, 1968), 182.

¹⁷ Paul Gautier, *Nicephore Bryennios Histoire: Introduction, Texte, Traduction et Notes*, *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* 9 (Brussels: Byzantion, 1975): 253.

¹⁸ Rhalles and Potles, eds., *Syntagma tōn theiōn kai ierōn kanonōn*, 2: 1–2.

¹⁹ Banchich and Lane, *The History of Zonaras*, 4–7.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Afinogenov holds that, in comparison with George the Monk, Zonaras "saw his historical writing as an entirely secular work, totally unrelated to his state as a monk." Afinogenov, "Some Observations," 20.

have corresponded to reality, but we should not ignore how it strengthens Zonaras's status as a sound historian.

Opinions are varied as to whether Zonaras wrote his history in response to Anna Komnene's *Alexiad*. In his prologue, Zonaras was critical of earlier historians who spent too long describing battles, and those who inserted long speeches and letters into their histories to show off their rhetoric.²² Hunger believes that Zonaras directed this criticism against Nikephoros Bryennios and Anna Komnene.²³ This seems unfounded to Afinogenov, who remarks that the same criticism would apply to Thucydides or Procopius.²⁴ He argues instead that Zonaras was writing more directly in opposition to George the Monk.²⁵ Kazhdan and Scott argue for Zonaras's depiction of Alexios I as a polemic against the laudatory portrayal in the *Alexiad*.²⁶ Magdalino understands Zonaras to be "corrective" to Anna's account.²⁷ On the other hand, Macrides thinks that Zonaras "may have read the *Alexiad*, but he did not model his account of Alexios's reign on it and he certainly has at least one other source for it."²⁸ Treadgold sees no evidence that Zonaras was aware of the *Alexiad*.²⁹ Zonaras's criticism of Alexios is constitutional: to Zonaras, Alexios did not properly demarcate between his personal household and the state.³⁰ This critical stance could have arisen from Zonaras's own thinking about Alexios's politics as much as from reacting against the *Alexiad*.

The following synopsis is intended to give a sense of the scope and pacing of this large text. It mentions the main sources used:

Book 1: Creation to Saul (using Josephus's *Jewish Antiquities* and *Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, and Kings*)

Book 2: David to Nebuchadnezzar (Josephus's *Jewish Antiquities, Daniel*, and Theodoret's *Commentary on Daniel*)

Book 3: Babylonian Captivity to Cyrus (Josephus's *Jewish Antiquities, Daniel, Judith, Tobias*, Theodoret's *Commentary on Daniel*, Plutarch's *Artaxerxes and Alexander*, and Xenophon's *Education of Cyrus*)

²² The prologue is translated in: Banchich and Lane, *The History of Zonaras*, 23–30.

²³ Herbert Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner: Philosophie, Rhetorik, Epistolographie, Geschichtsschreibung, Geographie*, vol. 1, *Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft*, 12.5 (Munich: Beck, 1978), 416.

²⁴ Afinogenov, "Some Observations," 21.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Alexander Kazhdan, *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 2229. Scott, "Narrating Justinian: From Malalas to Manasses," 42.

²⁷ Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel Komnenos* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993): 14.

²⁸ Macrides, "The Pen and the Sword," 73.

²⁹ Treadgold, *The Middle Byzantine Historians*, 389.

³⁰ Macrides and Magdalino, "Fourth Kingdom," 129–30; Magdalino, *Manuel*, 186–89; Büttner-Wobst, *Ioannis Zonarae epitomae historiarum*, 3:766.

- Book 4: Cyrus to Diodotus Tryphon, (Josephus's *Jewish Antiquities*, Herodotus, and Plutarch's *Alexander*)
- Book 5: Diodotus Tryphon to Herod (Josephus's *Jewish Antiquities*)
- Book 6: Herod to Roman destruction of Jerusalem (Josephus's *Jewish Antiquities* and *Jewish War*)
- Book 7: Aeneas to Spurius Postumius and Titus Calvinus (321 BCE) (Plutarch's *Romulus*, *Numa*, *Publicola*, *Camillus*, and Dio)
- Book 8: Gaius Iunius (311 BCE) to the retirement of Fabius (209 BCE), (Dio)
- Book 9: Scipio invades Hispania (211 BCE) to conquest of Carthage and Corinth (146 BCE), (Dio)
- Book 10: Pompey and Cinna through Augustus (Dio, Plutarch's *Pompeii* and *Caesar*, and Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History*)³¹
- Book 11: Tiberius to Antoninus (Dio, Eusebius, and Xiphilinos's epitome of Dio)³²
- Book 12: Antoninus Pius to Maximianus (Xiphilinos and Eusebius)
- Book 13: Maximinus and Constantius Chlorus to Marcian (450–457)
- Book 14: Leo I (457–474) to Theodosius III (715–717)
- Book 15: Leo III (717–741) to Michael II (820–829)
- Book 16: Theophilos (829–842) to Nikephoros II (963–969)
- Book 17: John Tzimiskes (969–976) to Theodora (1056)
- Book 18: Michael VI (1056–1057) to Alexios Komnenos (1081–1118)

The main sources for books 13–18 seem to be Malalas, George the monk, Skylitzes, and Psellos.³³

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

Over seventy-two manuscripts, including later metaphrases, still exist.³⁴ Zonaras was translated into Slavonic in the fourteenth century.³⁵ There is also an Aragonese version.³⁶

³¹ Schmidt, "Über die Quellen des Zonaras," 269–72.

³² Ursulus Boissevain, "Zonaras' Quelle Für Die Römische Kaisergeschichte von Nerva bis Severus Alexander," *Hermes* 26, no. 3 (1891): 440–52.

³³ Karpozilos, *Vyzantinoi historikoi kai chronographoi*, 3:473–84.

³⁴ Pietro Luigi Leone, "La tradizione manoscritta dell'epitome historiarum di Giovanni Zonaras," in *Syndesmos: studi in onore di Rosario Anastasi*, ed. Antonio Carile et al. (Catania: Università di Catania, 1991), 221–61; Külzer, "Die Anfänge der Geschichte," 150.

³⁵ Angelica Jacobs, ed., *Die byzantinische Geschichte bei Joannes Zonaras in slavischer Übersetzung*. Slavische Propyläen 98 (Munich: Fink, 1970).

³⁶ Joannes Zonaras, *Libro de los emperadores versión aragonesa del Compendio de historia universal patrocinada por Juan Fernández de Heredia*, 1a. ed., Larumbe 41 (Zaragoza: Prensas Universitarias de Zaragoza, 2006).

Editions

A modern edition is being prepared by Pietro Leone for the *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae*.

Publication History

The text was first published by Hieronymus Wolf in 1557.³⁷ Charles DuCange edited it again for the Paris Corpus in 1686–1687.³⁸ Moritz Pinder edited books 1–12 as series numbers 44 and 45 of the *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae*, in Bonn, 1841–1844. Theodor Büttner-Wobst edited books 13–18, which was published as volume number 46 of the *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae*, in Bonn in 1897.³⁹ August Dindorf also published a version in five volumes in Leipzig, 1868–1875.⁴⁰ The *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* uses Dindorf for books 1–12 and Büttner-Wobst for 13–18.

*Translations**English (Partial)*

A selection of Zonaras's coverage of late antiquity is translated into English in:

Banchich, Thomas, and Eugene Lane, trans. *The History of Zonaras: From Alexander Severus to the Death of Theodosius the Great*. Routledge Classical Translations. London: Routledge, 2009.

German (Partial)

Trapp, Erich, trans. *Militärs und Höflinge im Ringen um das Kaisertum: Byzantinische Geschichte 969 bis 1118 nach der Chronik des Johannes Zonaras*. Byzantinische Geschichtsschreiber 16. Graz: Styria, 1986.

Greek

Grēgoriadēs, Iordanēs, trans. *Ioānnēs Zōnaras: Epitomē historiōn*. Keimena Vyzantinēs historiographias 5. Athens: Kanakē, 1995.

³⁷ Hieronymus Wolf, ed., *Ioannis Zonarae monachi...* (Basel: per Ioannem Oporinum, 1557).

³⁸ Charles du Fresne, sieur Du Cange, *Ioannis Zonarae annales*, *Corpus Byzantinae Historiae* 24–25 (Paris: Ex Typographia Regia, 1686 and 1687).

³⁹ Theodor Büttner-Wobst and Moritz Pinder, eds., *Ioannis Zonarae Annales*, *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae* 44–46 (Bonn: Weber, 1841–1897).

⁴⁰ Ludwig August Dindorf, ed., *Ioannis Zonarae Epitome Historiarum*, *Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1868–1875). A sixth volume contains commentary and essays on Zonaras.

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- Mallan, Christopher. "The Historian John Zonaras: Some Observations on His Sources and Methods." In *Les historiens grecs et romains: entre sources et modèles*, edited by Olivier Devillers and Breno Sebastiani, 353–66. Bordeaux: Ausonius Éditions, 2018.

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Constantine Manasses

Constantine Manasses's *Synopsis Chronike*, commissioned by the *sebastokratorissa* Eirene, the sister-in-law of Manuel I (1140–1183), is an elementary introduction to history from Creation to 1081.¹ The text is written in fairly simple fifteen-syllable verse. Manasses focused on those aspects of history that would be entertaining and literarily interesting.² Manasses gathered material for his story from Kedrenos and Zonaras, as well as Dionysius of Halicarnassus, George the Monk, John of Antioch, and Theophanes.³

Manasses's history was extremely popular, judging from the large number of medieval manuscripts that survive. It was also paraphrased into vernacular Greek in the fourteenth century, translated into Bulgarian, and lavishly illustrated.⁴

Manasses begins with Creation and includes a luxurious *ekphrasis* (rhetorical description) of the Garden of Eden.⁵ He then provides a harmonizing

¹ *Sebastokratorissa* Eirene is described as a great patron of letters, but curiously seems rather undereducated for an aristocratic woman of her era, and scholars have supposed that she was born abroad and commissioned introductory texts to catch up on her classical education. Elizabeth Jeffreys, "The Sebastokratorissa Irene as Patron," in *Female Founders in Byzantium and Beyond*, ed. Lioba Theis, Margaret Mullett, and Michael Grünbart, 177–94. Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte, 60/61 (Vienna: Böhlau, 2014); Elizabeth Jeffreys and Michael Jeffreys, "Who Was the Sebastokratorissa Eirene?," *Byzantion* 64 (1994): 40–68; Elizabeth Jeffreys, "Sebastokratorissa Eirene as Literary Patroness: The Monk Iakovos," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 34 (1982): 63–71.

² Ingela Nilsson, "Discovering Literariness in the Past: Literature vs. History in the Synopsis Chronike of Konstantinos Manasses," in *L'écriture de la mémoire: la littérarité de l'historiographie*, ed. Paolo Odorico, Panagiotis A. Agapitos, and Martin Hinterberger, 2006, 15–31. Dossiers byzantines 6 (Paris: Centre d'études byzantines, néo-helléniques et sud-est européennes, École des hautes études en sciences sociales, 2006); Ingela Nilsson, "Constantine Manasses, Odysseus and the Cyclops: On Byzantine Appreciation of Pagan Art in the Twelfth Century," *Byzantinoslavica* 69 (2011): 123–36.

³ Apostolos D. Karpozilos, *Vyzantinoi historikoi kai chronographoi*, vol. 3 (Athens: Kanakē, 2009), 549–53.

⁴ Elena N. Boeck, "Engaging the Byzantine Past: Strategies of Visualizing History in Sicily and Bulgaria," in *History as Literature in Byzantium*, ed. Ruth Macrides (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 215–36.

⁵ Ingela Nilsson, "Narrating Images in Byzantine Literature: The Ekphrasis of Konstantinos Manasses," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 55 (2005): 121–46.

mix of biblical, Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian history. The discussion of David links to the Trojan War, which Manasses explained was contemporary with David's kingdom.⁶ The Trojan War is treated in detail (taking 467 lines), and leads directly into Roman history through the stories of Aeneas's settlement in Italy. The succession of Roman rulers then structures Manasses's chronicle from Romulus through the foundation of the Komnenian dynasty in the late eleventh century. The continuous narrative of Trojan and Roman history takes up 5,510 of the 6,620 lines of his chronicle.

Although he revels in the description of the Garden of Eden, Manasses's account of early history owes more to stories from Herodotus than the Septuagint. His history was richly entertaining, focusing on erotic adventure whenever possible. Manasses's history was enjoyed for its writing, and some readers compiled from it lists of gnomic expressions and elegant description that could be used as a sort of thesaurus.⁷

Constantine Manasses was a Constantinopolitan writer working in the third quarter of the twelfth century. He is known for a number of compositions in prose and verse. Manasses does not seem to have held any governmental or ecclesiastical office.⁸ He was patronized especially by *Sebastokratorissa* Eirene, who was the wife of Manuel Komnenos's brother Andronikos, and by the *sebastos* John Kontostephanos.⁹ He participated in an embassy to Jerusalem in 1160 that he described in a work he wrote called the *Hodoiporikon*. Manasses wrote in a variety of genres including speeches in praise of various members of the imperial family and *ekphrasis*. He wrote a romance in verse, *Aristander and Kallithea*, which today survives only in fragments.¹⁰ We have no firm evidence for his birth and death dates. Jeffreys estimates that he was born around 1120 and died sometime

⁶ Odysseus Lampsidis, ed., *Constantini Manassis breviarium chronicum*, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 36 (Athens: Institutum Graecoromanae Antiquitatis auctoribus edendis destinatum Academiae Atheniensis 1996), 1107–9.

⁷ Ingela Nilsson and Eva Nystrom, "To Compose, Read, and Use a Byzantine Text: Aspects of the Chronicle of Constantine Manasses," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 33, no. 1 (2009): 42–60.

⁸ The idea that he should be associated with the bishop of Naupaktos has been disproven by Odysseus Lampsidis, "Zur Biographie von Konstantin Manasses und seiner Chronik Synopsis," *Byzantion* 58 (1988): 97–111.

⁹ Paul Magdalino, "In Search of the Byzantine Courtier: Leo Choïrosphaktes and Constantine Manasses," in *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*, ed. Henry Maguire (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1997), 161–62.

¹⁰ Elizabeth Jeffreys, trans., *Four Byzantine Novels*, Translated Texts for Byzantinists 1 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012), 273–337.

after 1175.¹¹ The only evidence we have for the date of the *Synopsis Chronike* is that it was used by Michael Glykas.

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

Masassis's history survives in 125 manuscripts. Dozens of other manuscripts contain summaries or vernacular paraphrases.¹²

Edition

Lampsidis, Odysseus, ed. *Constantini Manassis breviarium chronicum*. 2 vols. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 36. Athens, Institutum Graecoromanae Antiquitatis auctoribus edendis destinatum Academiae Atheniensis, 1996.

Publication History

A Latin translation by Johannes Löwenklau was published in Basel in 1573.¹³ An edition based on one manuscript was published by Joannes Meursius in Leiden in 1616.¹⁴ Meursius's edition was published as part of the Paris Corpus in 1655 with textual emendations noted by Leo Allatius, based on the manuscripts in Rome, and Charles Fabroti, based on those in Paris.¹⁵ Immanuel Bekker included some of Allatius's and Fabroti's emendations in the notes to his edition for volume 29 of the Bonn Corpus in 1837.¹⁶ Meursius's edition, with the notes by Allatius and Fabroti, was published in volume 127 of Migne's *Patrologia Graeca* in 1864.¹⁷

¹¹ Magdalino, "In Search of the Byzantine Courtier: Leo Choïrosphaktes and Constantine Manasses," 161–64; Jeffreys, *Four Byzantine Novels*, 273–74.

¹² Odysseus Lampsidis, ed., *Constantini Manassis breviarium chronicum*, lxxvii–cxlix.

¹³ Leunclavius, ed., *Annales Constantini Manassis: Nunc Primum in lucem prolati, & de Graecis Latini Facti* (Basel: Ex Officina Episcopiana, 1573).

¹⁴ Joannes Meursius, *Constantini Manassis Annales: Graece Ae Latine. Grae Nunquam Hactenus Editos Primus Nunc Vulgavit* (Leiden: Ioannis Patii, 1616).

¹⁵ *Constantini Manassis breviarium historicum ex interpretatione Joa. Leunclavii cum ejusdem et Joannis Meursii Notis. Accedit variorum lectionum libellus, cura Leonis Allatii e Caroli Amibalis Fabroti*, (Paris: Ex Typographia Regia, 1655).

¹⁶ Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Constantini Manassis Breviarium Historiae Metricum*, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 29 (Bonn: Weber, 1837).

¹⁷ Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, vol. 127 (Paris: Apud J.-P. Migne editorem, 1864).

English

The opening description of the Garden of Eden is translated in: Nilsson, Ingela. "Narrating Images in Byzantine Literature: The Ekphraseis of Konstantinos Manasses." *Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik* 55 (2005): 121–46.

A partial English translation is in Linda Yuretich's unpublished MA thesis: Yuretich, Linda C. "The Chronicle of Constantine Manasses from the Creation of the World to the Reign of Constantine the Great: A Translation of the Middle Bulgarian and Greek Texts." MA, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, 1988.

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Michael Glykas

This history from Creation to 1118, entitled *Biblos Chronike*, presents a highly theological view of human history. It has four books covering history from: 1) Creation to Adam, 2) Cain and Abel to Julius Caesar, 3) Caesar to Constantine, and 4) Constantine to the death of Alexios Komnenos in 1118. Glykas's history is ostensibly addressed to his son and makes occasional comments to a second-person reader throughout the text.

Book 1 begins with a “hexameron,” a discussion of nature and theology organized around explicating God's creation of the world in the first six days.¹ This book is considerably longer than the other three and contains detailed discussions of cosmology, astronomy, natural history, and zoology.² Glykas discusses the *Hexameron* of Basil of Caesarea and other classical and late antique naturalists and theologians. His work draws on a late antique bestiary known as the *Physiologos*.³

Book 2 contains biblical history with a particular interest in the patriarchs' knowledge of astrology and in theological questions. The reign of the Persian emperor Artaxerxes is identified as the era of “Sophocles, Heraclites, Anaxagoras, Pythagoras, Thucydides, Euripides, Herodotus, Empedocles, Diogenes, Hippocrates, Plato, and Aristotle.”⁴ The two subsequent paragraphs move from Alexander the Great to the revolt of the Maccabees.

Book 3 opens with a discussion of Julius Caesar's birth but soon turns to the life of Jesus. Most of the book describes the lives of Jesus and the

¹ Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Michaelis Glycae Annales* (Bonn: Weber, 1836), 1–126; Soutana Mauromatē-Katsougiannopoulou, “Ἐξαμερος του Michael Glyka: Mia ekklaikeutikē epistemonikē pragmateia tou 12ou aiona,” *Vyzantina: Epistēmonikon organon Kentrou Vyzantinōn Ereunōn Philosophikēs Scholēs Aristoteliou Panepistēmiou* 17 (1994): 7–70.

² Book 1 is 221 pages in the Bonn edition, Book 2 157, Book 3 79, and Book 4 155.

³ Francesco Sbordone, “ΦΥΣΙΟΛΟΓΙΑ Parigina degli Annales di Michael Glykas,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 29, no. 2 (1930): 188–97; Francesco Sbordone, ed., *Physiologus* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1991).

⁴ Bekker, *Michaelis Glycae Annales*, 376.

apostles. The rest is comprised of brief paragraphs on the successive Roman emperors up to Aurelian, and then a race from Tacitus to Maximian in two paragraphs. Book 4 is a history of the emperors in Constantinople from Constantine up to Alexios Komnenos. A brief history of all eight ecumenical councils is inserted into the section on Justinian, but otherwise the narrative follows a clear chronological course. The pace slackens as Glykas moves into more contemporary history. For the reign of Alexios Komnenos he appears to follow the history of Zonaras. In keeping with his interest in natural history, particular attention is paid to unusual phenomena – effectively setting the history of the empire at Constantinople firmly into a cosmological history of divine economy.

Michael Glykas was a writer and theologian active in the second half of the twelfth century. He served as an imperial secretary in the court of Manuel Komnenos (1143–1180) and earned the title *grammatikos*. In addition to his history, Glykas wrote a long theological treatise in the form of questions and answers, a refutation of Manuel Komnenos's defense of astrology, various poems, and collected proverbs. Some of his answers to theological questions appear to refer to events that occurred in the 1180s.⁵ Glykas's history was written after that of Manasses, which he used.⁶

Glykas wrote the poem "Verses while in Prison," leading some scholars to believe that at one time he had been imprisoned. The manuscript of the poem provides a note explaining that Glykas had been unjustly blinded.⁷ Given what we currently understand about twelfth-century literary culture and poems similar to Glykas's, it now seems more likely that the poem depicts a fictional scenario and that the "I" speaking in the poem does not reveal information about Glykas's own life.⁸ Scholars trying to find a political context for Glykas's imprisonment have supposed that he had been linked to one of Manuel's advisors, Theodore Styppiotes, who was accused either of treason, or of practicing astrology and dark magic, and blinded in 1159.⁹ Glykas's continued career as a writer into the 1160s indicates that he

⁵ Paul Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143–1180* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 370.

⁶ Apostolos D. Karpozilos, *Vyzantinoi historikoi kai chronographoi*, vol. 2 (Athens: Kanakē, 2002), 593–94.

⁷ *Parisinus Graecus* 228 of the thirteenth century.

⁸ Emmanuel C. Bourbouhakis, "Political Personae: The Poem from Prison of Michael Glykas: Byzantine Literature Between Fact and Fiction," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 31, no. 1 (2007): 53–75. For the edition of the poem see: Eudoxos Tsolakēs, ed., *Michaēl Glyka Stichoi ous egrapse kath' on kateschethē kairon* (Thessaloniki: Parartēma, 1959).

⁹ Otto Kresten, "Zum Sturz des Theodoros Styppiotes," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 27 (1978): 49–103; Michael Angold, *Church and Society in Byzantium under the Comneni, 1081–1261* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 128–30. The accusation of treason is in Kinnamos's history and that of astrology and magic in Choniates's.

was not blinded, casting doubt on the witness of the manuscript note.¹⁰ It is not necessary to assume an imprisonment.

Glykas's treatise of questions and answers may have been compiled out of letters that he wrote in response to actual questions from his correspondents.¹¹ Some discussions in this text also appear in the history, suggesting that the two works may have had a common audience.¹² There is little evidence to determine whether the history or the collection of queries were written first. Glykas's poetry has been discussed as an early expression of vernacular Greek.¹³

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

Glykas's history survives in thirty manuscripts. They have not yet been thoroughly described.¹⁴

Editions

An edition of Glykas' history is being prepared by Martin Hinterberger for the Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae.

Publication History

The first edition of Glykas was edited by Jacobus Pontanus and published in Ingolstadt in 1604. An edition by Philippe Labbe with Latin translation

¹⁰ Scholars who accept the facticity of Glykas's blinding say that he was lightly or partially blinded.

¹¹ Sōphronios Eustratiadēs, ed., *Michaēl tou Glyka eis tas aporias tēs Theias Graphēs kephalaia*, 2 vols., Vivliothēkē Maraslē I (Athens: Sakellariou, 1906).

¹² Ruth Macrides and Paul Magdalino, "The Fourth Kingdom and the Rhetoric of Hellenism," in *The Perception of the Past in Twelfth-Century Europe* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1992), 120–39; Karl Krumbacher, "Michael Glykas: Eine Skizze seiner Biographie und seiner litterarischen Thätigkeit nebst einem unedierten Gedichte und Briefe desselben," in *Sitzungsberichte der philosophisch-historischen Klasse der K. Bayer.*, vol. 3 (Munich: Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1895), 398–99.

¹³ Hans Eideneier, "Zur Sprache des Michael Glykas," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 61 (1968): 5–9.

¹⁴ Andreas Külzer, "Die Anfänge der Geschichte: Zur Darstellung des 'Biblichen Zeitalters' in der byzantinischen Chronistik," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 93, no. 1 (2000): 138–56. Maria Elisabetta Colonna, *Gli storici bizantini dal IV al XV secolo*. (Naples: Armanni, 1956), 56. Boris L. Fonkitch, "La Chronique de Michel Glykas: Note sur les origines du manuscrit de Leningrad (une fois de plus sur Nathanaël Emboros et Nathanaël Chicas)," *Thesaurismata: Bolletino dell'istituto ellenico di studi bizantini e postbizantini* 19 (1982): 78–89; Spyros Lambros, "Ein neuer Codex der Chronik des Glykas," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 4, no. 3 (1895): 514.

by Johannes Leunclavius was published in the Paris Corpus in 1660¹⁵ and reprinted in the Venice Corpus in 1729.¹⁶ Immanuel Bekker edited Glykas's history for the Bonn Corpus in 1836.¹⁷ A version based on older editions was also published in 1866 in the *Patrologia Graeca*, alongside other of Glykas' works.¹⁸

Starting Points

We lack an English-language study devoted to Glykas's history. However, his history is discussed in:

Paul Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143–1180* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 370.

Macrides, Ruth, and Paul Magdalino. "The Fourth Kingdom and the Rhetoric of Hellenism." In *The Perception of the Past in Twelfth-Century Europe*, edited by Paul Magdalino, 117–56. London: Hambledon Press, 1992.

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¹⁵ Philippe Labbe, ed., *Michaelis Glycae siculi, Annales, a mundi exordio usque ad obitum Alexii Comneni imper. Quatuor in Partes tributi* (Paris: Ex Typographia Regia, 1660).

¹⁶ Philippe Labbe and Johannes Leunclavius, eds., *Tou kyrou Michael Glyka Sikeliotou Biblos chronikē = Michaelis Glycae Siculi, Annales a mundi exordio usque ad obitum Alexii Comneni Imper.: quatuor in partes tributi* (Venice: Ex Typographia Bartholomaei Javarina, 1729).

¹⁷ Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Michaelis Glycae Annales*, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 27 (Bonn: Weber, 1836).

¹⁸ Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, vol. 158 (Paris: Apud J.-P. Migne, 1866). Glykas's work is covered in pages iii–966.

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Eustathios of Thessaloniki

Eustathios, bishop of Thessaloniki, wrote a vivid, firsthand account of the sack of Thessaloniki by the Normans of Sicily shortly after the city was captured in 1185.¹ The work opens with a discussion of how the writing of one who experienced a disaster will necessarily differ from that of a dispassionate historian. Eustathios claims that he writes from the honest perspective of a participant and sufferer rather than a rhetorically artful historian.² Eustathios's account combines complex sentences and allusions to classical Greek authors with more everyday expressions and scriptural quotations.³

After an opening lamentation for the sack of the city and invective against its incompetent commander, David Komnenos,⁴ Eustathios goes back to take up the narrative of the accession of Andronikos II (1183–1185) and the early years of his reign. Eustathios's portrait of Andronikos is deeply negative, highlighting in particular Andronikos's brutal treatment of the Byzantine nobility. Eustathios then turns his attention to the campaign launched by William II of Sicily (1155–1189), whose army entered Thessaloniki after a brief siege, in large part the result, Eustathios argues, of the incompetent defense mounted by David Komnenos. The narrative then describes the sufferings of Thessaloniki's population at the hands of the conquerors and Eustathios's own experiences, including his efforts to mitigate the conquerors' treatment of his fellow citizens.

Although Eustathios is a well-known figure of the twelfth century, many of whose letters and rhetorical works survive, scholars have found it difficult to reconstruct a precise biography.⁵ His year and place of birth are

¹ John R. Melville Jones, trans. *Eustathios of Thessaloniki, the Capture of Thessaloniki: A Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Byzantina Australiensia 8 (Canberra: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1988), viii.

² Melville Jones, *Eustathios of Thessaloniki*, 2–5.

³ *Ibid.*, xi–x.

⁴ Melville Jones, *Eustathios of Thessaloniki*, 5–19.

⁵ See Forteini Kolovou, ed., *Die Briefe des Eustathios von Thessalonike: Einleitung, Regesten, Text, Indizes*, Beiträge zur Altertumskunde 239 (Munich: Saur, 2006), 3; Karin Metzler, ed., *Eustathii*

not known. Typical estimates have ranged between 1110 and 1115.⁶ His letters indicate that he was educated in Constantinople and embarked on an ecclesiastical career, beginning as a minister in the Church of St. Euphemia and later – around the 1160s – serving as a deacon for the patriarch.⁷ During this time he was active as a teacher and mostly likely wrote his famous commentaries on the Iliad and the Odyssey, along with other commentaries on ancient authors.⁸ Around 1168, he attained the high rank of *maistōr tōn rhētorōn*, which also included duties in the imperial court.⁹ A petition, written to Patriarch Michael III Angelou (1170–1178) by Eustathios regarding his demotion from the eleventh to the twelfth rank in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, has survived.¹⁰ Sometime around the mid-1170s, Eustathios was appointed bishop of Myra, and in 1176 was appointed metropolitan of Thessaloniki by Emperor Manuel I Komnenos.¹¹ Around this time, Eustathios appears to have traveled and composed various speeches to the emperor, including a eulogy for Manuel I. Eustathios had disagreed with Manuel regarding whether Muslim converts were required to condemn Allah.¹² In 1185, Thessaloniki was captured by the Normans, and Eustathios was taken hostage. Eustathios composed an account of these events in 1186, after the deposition of Andronikos I (1181–1185) and

Thessalonicensis de Emendanda Vita Monachica, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 45 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2006), 3.

- ⁶ In one of his speeches, Eustathios mentions that he has childhood memories of the reign of Alexius I, who died in 1118. See Peter Wirth, ed., *Eustathii Thessalonicensis Opera Minora*, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 32 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2000), 5. Metzler, *Vita Monachica*, 3; Kolovou, *Briefe des Eustathios*, 3.
- ⁷ Kolovou, *Briefe des Eustathios*, 3; Metzler, *Vita Monachica*, 3; Wirth, *Opera Minora*, 5. On Eustathios' education, see especially Peter Wirth, "Die Jugendbildung des Eustathios von Thessalonike. Zur Entmythologisierung der 'Patriarchal Akademie' von Konstantinopel," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 34 (1968): 148–50.
- ⁸ Wirth, *Opera Minora*, 5; Metzler, *Vita Monachica*, 4; Kolovou, *Briefe des Eustathios*, 3.
- ⁹ Metzler, *Vita Monachica*, 4; Wirth, *Opera Minora*, 5–6. Browning, however, argues that Eustathios did not in fact occupy this post. See Robert Browning, "The Patriarchal School at Constantinople in the Twelfth Century," *Byzantion* 32 (1962): 192. It has often been speculated that he also served as *epi tōn deēseōn*, but the evidence for this has been called into question. Kolovou, *Briefe des Eustathios*, 4; Wirth, *Opera Minora*, 5.
- ¹⁰ Sonja Schönauer, "Eustathios von Thessalonike – Ein 'Fahrender Scholiast'?" *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 97, no. 1 (2004): 143; Wirth, *Opera Minora*, 5; Kolovou, *Briefe des Eustathios*, 3.
- ¹¹ Paul Magdalino, "Eustathios and Thessalonica," in *Philellēn: Studies in Honour of Robert Browning*, ed. Costas N. Constantinides, Nikolaos Panagiotakes, and Elizabeth Jeffreys (Venice: Istituto ellenico di studi bizantini e postbizantini di Venezia, 1996), 227; Kolovou, *Briefe des Eustathios*, 4; Schönauer, "Eustathios von Thessalonike"; Peter Wirth, "Zur Frage nach dem Beginne des Episkopats des Eustathios von Thessalonike," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft* 16 (1967): 143–46; Wirth, *Opera Minora*, 6.
- ¹² Metzler, *Vita Monachica*, 4; Schönauer, "Eustathios von Thessalonike," 146. The disagreement about conversion was recorded by Niketas Choniates.

after the Normans had been defeated by Isaac II Angelos (1185–1195).¹³ Eustathios had a troubled relationship with his diocesans.¹⁴ At some point, possibly around 1191, he left Thessaloniki (or was forced to leave), but he returned and served on until his death, which scholars believe occurred around 1195–1196.¹⁵

Eustathios's extensive writings include his commentaries on Homer and a commentary on Dionysios Periegetes, both of which have survived in their entirety; a commentary on Pindar of which only the prologue has survived; his history of the capture of Thessaloniki; a large number of political speeches; works on practical theology; homilies; compilations of hymns; numerous letters; and a number of other works.¹⁶

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

Eustathios's account of the capture of Thessaloniki survives in a single manuscript, produced during Eustathios's lifetime in the late twelfth century: *Codex A III 20*, housed in the Basel library.¹⁷

Editions

Kyriakidis, Stilpon, ed. *Eustazio di Tessalonica, la Espugnazione di Tessalonica*. Translated by Vincenzo Rotolo. Palermo: Istituto siciliano di studi bizantini e neoellenici, 1961.

¹³ Magdalino, "Eustathios and Thessalonica," 227; Wirth, *Opera Minora*, 6; Kolovou, *Briefe des Eustathios*, 4; Metzler, *Vita Monachica*, 5.

¹⁴ On this relationship see Magdalino, "Eustathios and Thessalonica."

¹⁵ Peter Wirth, "Die flucht des Erzbischofs Eustathios aus Thessalonike," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 53, no. 1 (1960): 83–85; Wirth, *Opera Minora*, 6; Wirth, *Eustathiana: Gesammelte Aufsätze zu Leben und Werk des Metropoliten Eustathios von Thessalonike* (Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1980), 39–41; Schönauer, "Eustathios von Thessalonike," 151; Kolovou, *Briefe des Eustathios*, 4–5; Metzler, *Vita Monachica*, 5. Metzler believes that his flight may have occurred even before the capture of the city. On his date of death, see Peter Wirth, "Ein neuer terminus ante quem non für das Ableben des Erzbischofs Eustathios von Thessalonike," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 54 (1961): 86–87. On Eustathios's biography, see also Herbert Hunger, trans. *Die Normannen in Thessalonike; Die Eroberung von Thessalonike durch die Normannen, 1185 N. Chr., in Der Augenzeugenschilderung des Bischofs Eustathios* (Graz: Styria, 1955), 8–10; Browning, "The Patriarchal School at Constantinople in the Twelfth Century," 190–93.

¹⁶ For a list of works, see Kolovou, *Briefe des Eustathios*, 5–7; Wirth, *Opera Minora*, 7–8. For a discussion of some of his works, see Herbert Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner. Philologie, Profandichtung, Musik, Mathematik und Astronomie, Naturwissenschaften, Medizin, Kriegswissenschaft, Rechtsliteratur*, vol. 1 (Munich: Beck, 1978), 63–67.

¹⁷ Melville Jones, *Eustathios of Thessaloniki, the Capture of Thessaloniki*, vii; Herbert Hunger, trans., *Die Normannen in Thessalonike*, 12.

Publication History

Eustathios's history was first published by Tafel in 1832.¹⁸ It was edited by Bekker for the Bonn Corpus, and Bekker's edition was reprinted by Migne in volume 136 of *Patrologia Graeca*.¹⁹

*Translations**English*

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German

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Greek

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¹⁸ Gottlieb Lukas Friedrich Tafel, *Eustathii metropolitae Thessalonicensis opuscula. Accedunt Trapezuntinae historiae Panaretus et Euagenicus. E codicibus mss. Basilensi, Parisinis, Veneto* (Frankfurt: Sumptibus Sigismundi Schmerber, 1832).

¹⁹ Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Leonis Grammatici Chronographia; Accedit Eustathii de capta Thessalonica liber*. Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 47, (Bonn: Weber, 1842). Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, vol. 136 (Paris: Apud J.-P. Migne, 1865).

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Joel

A chronicle surviving in four manuscripts is attributed to Joel. In three of the manuscripts the *Chronographia en synopsei* (Summary Chronicle) of Joel covers from Adam to the capture of Constantinople in 1204.¹ In a fourth manuscript, the narrative extends to 1258.² This is a brief chronicle (1614 lines in Iadevaia's edition of the short version) that lists rulers in order, with information on the length of their reigns. It integrates the reigns of select Babylonian, Persian, Macedonian, and Seleucid rulers with those of biblical patriarchs and rulers. From Julius Caesar onward, the chronicle follows the line of Roman emperors.

In the final lines of the short version, the author lists Andronikos Komnenos's murder of Alexios II, Isaac Angelos's murder of Andronikos, Alexios III Angelos's blinding of Isaac, Alexios IV's exile of Alexios III, and Alexios V's murder of Alexios IV. He then concludes: "Alas for these things that Christians have done to Christians! How could justice remain silent and not hand us over to captivity and destruction? Which, indeed happened, and for such wickedness the illustrious city of Constantine was given to the Italians."³

Given the way this text ends, with the sack of Constantinople in 1204, it was most likely written in the thirteenth century – before the re-conquest in 1261. The style in which emperors are noted changes after Nikephoros Botaneiates (1078–1081), leading Tsolakēs to argue that a first version of the text was composed in the reign of Alexios Komnenos (1081–1118) and then extended to 1204. The version in the Iviron manuscript that extends to 1258 apparently was made before the reconquest of Constantinople in 1261.⁴

¹ *Vindobonensis Theologicus Graecus 304, Vaticanus Graecus 483, and Vaticanus Barberinianus 192.*

² *Athos, Iviron 349.*

³ Francesca Iadevaia, ed., *Joel: Cronografia compendiaría* (Messina: EDAS, 1979), 125–26.

⁴ Eudoxos Tsolakēs, "Ena neo cheirographo tēs 'Chronographias en sunopsei' tou Iōēl," in *Philtra: Timētikos tomos S.G. Kapsōmenou*, ed. Stylianos Kapsōmenos (Thessaloniki: Nikolaïdē, 1975), 301–2.

The author appears to have used the work of George the Monk, Skylitzes, *Scylitzes Continuatus*, and George Kedrenos.⁵ Dean Sakel suggests that the Chronicle of Joel may have been used as a source for the Chronicle of 1570.⁶

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

The text is included in *Vindobonensis Theologicus Graecus 304* (ca. 1300), *Vaticanus Graecus 483* (fourteenth century), and *Athos, Iveron 349* (fourteenth century). *Vaticanus Barberinianus 192* is a copy of *Vaticanus Graecus 483*.⁷

Editions

Leo Allatius first edited the text, along with the histories of George Akropolites and John Kanonos, for a volume of the Paris Corpus published in 1651.⁸ This edition was included in the Bonn Corpus, vol. 28 in 1836.⁹ Allatius used the *Vaticanus Barberinianus 192* manuscript.¹⁰ Allatius's edition was reprinted again in *Patrologia Graeca* 139, col. 224–88.¹¹

Translations

Italian

Iadevaia, Francesca, ed. *Joel: Cronografia compendiaria*. Translated by Francesca Iadevaia. Messina: EDAS, 1979.

⁵ Iadevaia, *Joel: Cronografia compendiaria*, 10.

⁶ Dean Sakel, "A User of the Chronicle of Joel," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 108, no. 1 (2015): 169–78.

⁷ Eudoxos Tsolakēs, "Ἐ cheirographē paradosē tou chronographikou ergou tou Iōēl," *Vyzantina: epistēmikon organon Kentrou Vyzantinōn Ereunōn Philosophikēs Scholēs Aristoteleiou Panepistēmiou* 8 (1976): 449–61; Tsolakēs, "Ena neo cheirographo tēs 'Chronographias en sunopsei' tou Iōēl," 293.

⁸ Leone Allacci, ed., *Georgii Acropolite Magni Logothetæ Historia, Ioelis Chronographia Compendiaria, & Ioannis Canani Narratio de Bello CP. Leone Allatio Interprete, Cvm eiusdem Notis, & Theodori Dovzæ Observationibus. Accēssit Diatriba de Georgivm Scriptis*. (Paris: Ex Typographia Regia, 1651).

⁹ Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Ioelis Cronografia compendiaria*, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 28 (Bonn: Weber, 1836).

¹⁰ Tsolakēs, "Ena neo cheirographo tēs 'Chronographias en sunopsei' tou Iōēl," 293.

¹¹ Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, vol. 139 (Paris: Apud J.-P. Migne, 1865).

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Niketas Choniates

This detailed history covers 1118 to the early thirteenth century in a highly elusive and complex classicizing style. The *History* is the only surviving historical narrative from a Byzantine author for the last decades of the twelfth century, and is generally considered an indispensable source for the twelfth century and the history of the Third and Fourth Crusades.¹ Several scholars, including Alexander Kazhdan and Alicia Simpson, view Choniates's text as stylistically distinct from previous historical writing in the empire, especially in terms of its tragic mood and the subtlety of its characterizations.² At the same time, as Jonathan Harris has argued, Choniates remained deeply rooted in the Greek historiographical tradition.³ Choniates's writing is extraordinarily complex and he frequently plays with the multiple meanings of words as well as with readers' expectations.⁴

Choniates's text is a political and military history, covering the deeds of the Komnenian emperors and their successors beginning in 1118 through the sack of Constantinople in 1204 in the Fourth Crusade – an event to which the author was an eyewitness. The reign of John (1118–1143) is treated relatively briefly, and the story increases in detail for the reigns of Manuel (1143–1180) and his successors. The manuscript tradition preserves two versions of the history. Although it narrates events through spring 1205, first version of the *History* was mostly written before the conquest of

¹ Alicia Simpson, *Niketas Choniates: A Historiographical Study* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 5–7; Jonathan Harris, “Distortion, Divine Providence and Genre in Niketas Choniates's Account of the Collapse of Byzantium 1180–1204,” *Journal of Medieval History* 26, no. 1 (2000): 19–31.

² Simpson, *Niketas Choniates*, 5–7. Alexander Kazhdan and Annabel Jane Wharton, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 225–30.

³ Harris, “Distortion.”

⁴ Stephanos Efthymiadis, “Niketas Choniates: The Writer,” in *Niketas Choniates: A Historian and a Writer*, ed. Alicia Simpson and Stephanos Efthymiadis, 35–58 (Geneva: La Pomme d'Or, 2009); Anthony Kaldellis, “Paradox, Reversal and the Meaning of History,” in *Niketas Choniates: A Historian and a Writer*, ed. Alicia Simpson and Stephanos Efthymiadis, 75–100 (Geneva: La Pomme d'Or, 2009), 75–100.

the city, while Choniates was working for the imperial government.⁵ This first version of the *History* is shorter and less critical toward the emperors it depicts, especially Alexios III (1195–1203). The second, revised version, which Choniates revised in exile after 1204, is longer, more moralizing and cynical, and is much more critical of emperors and common citizens.⁶ It covers the years 1118 through 1206.⁷ The less accusatory first version was probably written in the court of Alexios III, where a negative portrait of the reigning emperor would have been impolitic.⁸ The second version offers criticism as a means of explaining the disaster of 1204.⁹

Van Dieten, Alicia Simpson, and others believe that both versions of the *History* were written in whole, or at least to a very large extent, by Choniates. Riccardo Maisano suggests that some changes were made to the text by Choniates's friends, who formed the initial audience for the work.¹⁰

Paul Magdalino and Alexander Kazhdan have questioned the accuracy of Choniates's largely negative portrayals of certain emperors, particularly Manuel Komnenos.¹¹ Efthymiadis interprets Choniates's opening section on the family of Alexios Komnenos as an excursus on the moral failings that were the root of later decline.¹²

The main sources for Choniates's biography are his own writings, and those of his older brother, Michael, who served as the metropolitan of Athens from 1182–1204.¹³ Scholarly estimates place Choniates's birth between 1150 and 1160.¹⁴ Choniates grew up in the provincial town of Chonai, near Colossae. At the age of nine he was sent to Constantinople, where he spent the next years under his brother's tutelage. Choniates embarked on a successful career in the imperial administration, primarily in the provinces, first as a lower-level tax official, then as imperial under-secretary, and later as imperial secretary. Around 1186, he married the sister

⁵ van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae historia*; Alicia Simpson, "Before and After 1204: The Versions of Niketas Choniates' 'Historia,'" *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 60 (2006): 189–221.

⁶ Simpson, *Niketas Choniates*, 2–3, 68–77.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 71–2.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 76–77.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 77–80; Riccardo Maisano, "Varianti d'autore' in Niceta Coniata?," in *Problemi di ecdotica e esegesi di testi bizantini e grecomedievali*, ed. Roberto Romano (Naples: Arte Tipographia, 1994), 63–80.

¹¹ Simpson, *Niketas Choniates*, 3–5; Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos*, 4–22; Alexander Kazhdan, *Studies on Byzantine Literature of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 256–86.

¹² Efthymiades, "Niketas Choniates: The Writer," 2009, 38–40; Neville, *Anna Komnene*, 2016, 101–11.

¹³ Jan Louis van Dieten, *Niketas Choniates. Erläuterungen zu den Reden und Briefen nebst einer Biographie*, *Supplementa Byzantina* 2 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1971), 1.

¹⁴ Simpson, *Niketas Choniates*, 12; van Dieten, *Niketas Choniates. Erläuterungen*, 18.

of an imperial official; he had several children with her. Subsequently, he was appointed “head of the public treasury,” held a number of administrative and judicial posts, including governor of Philippopolis, twice accompanied the army on campaign, and reached the peak of his career when he was promoted to *logothetes ton sekreton* at some point in the 1190s, a post he held until he was dismissed by Emperor Alexios V Doukas in 1204.¹⁵ He participated in imperial diplomacy with Frederick Barbarossa.¹⁶ Over the course of his career he composed a large number of orations dedicated to Emperors Isaac II, Alexios III, and Theodore I, many of which, along with eleven of his letters, are still extant.¹⁷

When the Crusaders sacked Constantinople in 1204, Choniates fled with his family to Selymbria and roughly three years later joined the court of Emperor Theodore Laskaris in Nicaea. He performed miscellaneous duties for high-ranking officials but never again rose to a prominent position. While in Nicaea, he continued to work on the *History*.¹⁸ He also finished the twenty-seven book *Dogmatike Panoplia*, a defense of Orthodox theology, and composed *De Signis*, a description of Constantinople’s artistic treasures.¹⁹

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

More than twelve manuscripts of the *History* are extant, several from the thirteenth century and others from the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth.²⁰ According to van Dieten, the two main versions of the *History* gave rise to three separate families of manuscripts. The first family, *b*, corresponds roughly with the first version of the text and covers the years 1118 to 1205. The second family, *a*, begins in the same year but ends in 1206.

¹⁵ Simpson, *Niketas Choniates*, 15–21; van Dieten, *Niketas Choniates. Erläuterungen*, 8–42. The exact trajectory of his career is not fully known. For instance, the precise date of his appointment to *logothetes ton sekreton* and the precise nature of this office are the subject of scholarly disagreement. A full list of the offices and titles Choniates possessed can be found in *Ibid.*, 56–57.

¹⁶ Harris, “Distortion,” 19.

¹⁷ Simpson, *Niketas Choniates*, 50–67; Franz Grabler, ed., *Kaisertaten und Menschenschicksale im Spiegel der schönen Rede: Reden und Briefe des Niketas Choniates*, trans. Franz Grabler, *Byzantinische Geschichtsschreiber 11* (Graz: Styria, 1966). A list of the surviving letters and orations can be found in van Dieten, *Niketas Choniates. Erläuterungen*, 58–60.

¹⁸ Simpson, *Niketas Choniates*, 21–23; van Dieten, *Niketas Choniates. Erläuterungen*, 42–51.

¹⁹ Simpson, *Niketas Choniates*, 36–37; Anthony Cutler, “The ‘De Signis’ of Nicetas Choniates. A Reappraisal,” *American Journal of Archaeology* 72, no. 1 (1968): 113–18.

²⁰ Simpson, *Niketas Choniates*, 106.

A third family engages with events from 1203 to about 1210–1211. Other extant manuscripts share features of both *a* and *b*, and some constitute a more compressed form of the *b* text.²¹

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Publication History

Choniates's *History* was first edited by Hieronymus Wolf in 1557.²² Immanuel Bekker edited the *History* for the Bonn Corpus in 1835.²³ Wolf's version was republished in 1894 in Migne's *Patrologia Graeca*.²⁴

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²¹ van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae historia*, XIX–CI.

²² Hieronymus Wolf, ed., *Imperii Graeci Historia* (Geneva: Eustathij Vignon, 1557).

²³ Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Nicetae Choniatae Historia*, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 23 (Bonn: Weber, 1835).

²⁴ Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, vol. 139 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1865).

Die Kreuzfahrer erobern Konstantinopel. Die Regierungszeit der Kaiser Alexios Angelos, Isaak Angelos und Alexios Dukas, die Schicksale der Stadt nach der Einnahme sowie das "Buch von den Bildsäulen" (1195–1206) aus dem Geschichtswerk des Niketas Choniates. Vol. 3. Byzantinische Geschichtsschreiber 9. Graz: Styria, 1958.

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George Akropolites

The detailed *History* of George Akropolites covers events from 1203 to 1261, and is an indispensable source for the history of the empire of Nicaea.¹ The main narrative opens with a discussion of the Fourth Crusade and the sack of Constantinople. It then follows the reigns of the Byzantine emperors in Nicaea: Theodore I Laskaris, John III Vatatzes, Theodore II Laskaris, and Michael VIII Palaiologos. The history ends with events following Michael VIII's conquest of Constantinople in 1261.²

The text focuses on the lives of the emperors and diplomatic and military history, dwelling particularly on the attempt to reconquer lost territory.³ It provides an extensive account of the trial of the future emperor Michael VIII for treason.⁴ Akropolites presents autobiographical details frequently throughout the text. He was an eyewitness to many of the events he describes.⁵ Aside from his own personal experience, he appears to have drawn on official documents and may have relied on other historical accounts, but he never names these explicitly.⁶ Akropolites's writing style has been described as concise and unadorned, as well as carefully organized along chronological and geographic lines.⁷ Although Akropolites claims to provide an objective account, Macrides has argued that he used the *History*

¹ Ruth Macrides, trans., *George Akropolites: The History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 5; Wilhelm Blum, trans., *Die Chronik Georgios Akropolites*, Bibliothek der griechischen Literatur 28 (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1989), 17.

² See Blum, *Die Chronik*, 60–66, for a concise list of the events narrated in the *History*. Also see Macrides, *George Akropolites: The History*, 5 and 55–65.

³ *Ibid.*, 43–44.

⁴ On Akropolites's account of the trial, see Ruth Macrides, "George Akropolites' Rhetoric," in *Rhetoric in Byzantium*, ed. Elizabeth Jeffreys (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 206–8.

⁵ Macrides, *George Akropolites: The History*, 29–30; Martin Hinterberger, *Autobiographische Traditionen in Byzanz*, Wiener byzantinistische Studien 22 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1999), 309–16.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 35–39.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 34–35; Macrides, "George Akropolites' Rhetoric," 202–3. On style see also Blum, *Die Chronik*, 29–37.

to dissociate himself from the Laskarid dynasty, whose members he sharply critiques, and to present Michael VIII as the empire's legitimate ruler. He did so, Macrides believes, in order to retain the latter's favor at court.⁸

The *History* as we have it seems incomplete. It ends in mid-sentence while covering the events of 1261, and in other ways seems unrevised. It is possible that Akropolites intended to write more. Alternatively, part of the text may have been destroyed by Akropolites' anti-unionist detractors.⁹

Knowledge of George Akropolites's biography mostly derives from his *History*, in which he frequently incorporates his own life's story into the narrative.¹⁰ He was born in Constantinople in 1217 to a relatively well-off family with a tradition of working in the civil service, although his father's precise occupation is not known. Akropolites began his schooling in Constantinople. At the age of sixteen, his father sent him to Nicaea. There, he spent time at court and won the favor of Emperor John III Vatatzes (1222–1254). Under the emperor's patronage, he studied rhetoric, logic, grammar, theology, arithmetic, and geometry, first under Theodore Hexapterygos and then with Nikephoros Blemmydes. He thereafter served as tutor for John III's son, Theodore II Laskaris.¹¹

Starting in 1246, Akropolites performed various administrative and diplomatic duties for John III and his successors. In the course of that year, he accompanied John III on campaign in Greece. In subsequent years, he participated in two embassies, the first to Larissa and the second to Constantinople, and served as one of the judges presiding over the trial of the future emperor Michael VIII for treason. By the year 1252, he may have attained the rank of *logothetes tou genikou*. In 1254, Akropolites accompanied John's successor, Theodore II (1254–1258), on campaign against the Bulgarians. Theodore II appointed him *praitor* of Albanon and western Macedonia in 1256, with the power to appoint military and civilian officials. It was around this time – or possibly earlier – that he attained the very high rank of *mezas logothetes* and married Eudokia, a relative of Michael VIII Palaiologos. The couple had at least two children, the elder of whom was named Constantine. After spending two years in the captivity of Michael

⁸ Macrides, *George Akropolites: The History*, 40–1–65; Macrides, “George Akropolites' Rhetoric,” 210; Ruth Macrides, “The Historian in the History,” in *Philhellēn: Studies in Honour of Robert Browning* ed. Costas N. Constantinides, Nikolaos Panagiotakes, and Elizabeth Jeffreys (Venice: Istituto ellenico di studi bizantini e postbizantini di Venezia, 1996), 221–23.

⁹ Macrides, *George Akropolites: The History*, 31–32.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹¹ Blum, *Die Chronik*, 1–6; Macrides, *George Akropolites: The History*, 5–11, 28–29.

II of Epiros, who conquered the area under Akropolites's control toward the end of the 1250s, Akropolites resumed his imperial duties. The new emperor, Michael VIII (1259–1282), sent him on an embassy to the court of Bulgarian Tsar Constantine Tich, where he stayed from 1260 through 1261.¹²

Following these events, Akropolites returned to the court at Nicaea and then to Constantinople, which had been reconquered by Michael VIII in 1261. At the request of Michael VIII, Akropolites began to teach philosophy, mathematics, and composition, ultimately becoming a central figure in the revival of higher education in the capital. His teaching career roughly spanned the years 1262 to 1274, according to the autobiography of one of his students, George of Cyprus. During this time, he also continued to perform his duties as *megas logothetes* and drew on the considerable fortune he had amassed to restore the Anastasis monastery in Constantinople.¹³

In 1274, Akropolites was among the leaders of the Greek delegation to the Second Council of Lyon, where, on the emperor's instructions, he helped negotiate the union of the Greek Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches. His last known diplomatic mission was to Trebizond in 1281 or 1282 – an initially unsuccessful attempt to broker the marriage of Michael VIII's daughter to Emperor John II of Trebizond. After Akropolites's death, in 1282,¹⁴ opponents of the union burned his theological writing.¹⁵ While some of his works have been lost, a few of his writings survive in addition to the history. These include a funeral oration for Emperor John III, a letter to John Tornikes, and an encomium of Peter and Paul. A few other possible works are of disputed authorship.¹⁶ The seal he used as *megas logothetes* has survived, along with Akropolites's signature on a 1277 chrysobull.¹⁷

The date of composition of the *History* is not precisely known. Textual analysis, comparison with contemporaneous sources, and the observation that Akropolites appears to have written with the benefit of hindsight have

¹² Macrides, *George Akropolites: The History*, 9–12; Blum, *Die Chronik*, 4–9. On the titles Akropolites held and the dates of his promotions see especially Macrides, *George Akropolites: The History*, 19–28. This is an area of considerable uncertainty. For instance, Blum believes that Akropolites had already attained the rank of *megas logothetes* by the age of 22, while Macrides suggests a later date.

¹³ Macrides, *George Akropolites: The History*, 12–14, 16–17; Blum, *Die Chronik*, 9–11.

¹⁴ Macrides, *George Akropolites: The History*, 15–16; Blum, *Die Chronik*, 11–13.

¹⁵ Macrides, *George Akropolites: The History*, 32 and 76.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 76–78; Blum, *Die Chronik*, 14–19. See volume 2 of Peter Wirth, ed., *Georgii Acropolitae Opera*, trans. August Heisenberg, corrected edition, 2 vols. (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1978).

¹⁷ Macrides, *George Akropolites: The History*, 22 and 15–16. On the seal, see Anastasia Oikonomou-Laniado, "Un sceau de Georges Akropolite trouvé à Argos," *Revue des études Byzantines* 55, no. 1 (1997): 289–93.

led many scholars to suggest a date in the 1260s. It is possible, however, that Akropolites carried out his work somewhat later than this.¹⁸

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

The *History* has come down to us, wholly or in part, in eleven manuscripts that date from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries.¹⁹

Edition

Heisenberg, August and Peter Wirth, eds., *Georgii Acropolitae Opera*. Ed. stereotypa anni 1903 / correctiorem curavit Peter Wirth, 2 vols. Bibliotheca scriptorium Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana. Stuttgart: Teubner, 1978. Originally printed 1903.

Publication History

Theodore Dousa first published the text in 1614.²⁰ His edition was based on *Lugduni Batavorum 1614* which had been given to his brother Georgio Dousa in 1597 in Constantinople. Leo Allatius edited it for the Paris Corpus in 1651 using *Barberianus II 85*.²¹ It was edited by Immanuel Bekker on the basis of the previous publications for Bonn Corpus in 1836. *Patrologia Graeca* volume 140 reproduced Allatius's text and translation with notes by Allatius and Dousa in 1865.²² August Heisenberg published a new edition and translation in 1903.²³ Heisenberg's edition was reprinted with corrections by Peter Wirth in 1978.

¹⁸ Macrides, *George Akropolites: The History*, 31–34; Blum, *Die Chronik*, 19–23. Also see Günter Prinzing, review of Wilhelm Blum, *Die Chronik*, in *Orthodoxes Forum* 7 (1993), 121–25.

¹⁹ Peter Wirth, ed., *Georgii Acropolitae Opera*, trans. August Heisenberg, corrected edition, vol. 1 (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1978), iii–xxiv; August Heisenberg, “Studien zur Textgeschichte des Georgios Akropolites,” *Programm des Kgl. humanistischen Gymnasiums zu Landau* (Landau: Kaussler, 1894), 5–55; August Heisenberg, “Studien zu Georgios Akropolites,” *Sitzungsberichte der philosophisch-philologischen und der historischen Classe der K.B. Akademie der Wissenschaften zu München*, (Munich, Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1899), 463–557.

²⁰ Theodore Dousa, ed., *Georgii Logothetae Acropolitae Chronicon Constantinopolitanum, Complectens Historiam Captae Constantinopoleos & Quinquaginta Annotum, à Balduino Flandro Augusto Ad Balduinum Ultimam, Eius Nepotem, Byzantij Imp.* (Leiden: Godefridi Basson, 1614).

²¹ Leone Allacci, ed., *Georgii Acropolite Magni Logothetae Historia, Ioelis Chronographia Compendiaria, & Ioannis Canani Narratio de Bello CP. Leone Allatio Interprete, Cvm eiusdem Notis, & Theodori Dovae Observationibus. Acceffit Diatriba de Georgium Scriptis.* (Paris: Ex Typographia Regia, 1651).

²² Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, vol. 140 (Paris: Apud J.-P. Migne, 1865); Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Georgii Acropolitae Annales*, *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae* 33 (Bonn: Weber, 1836).

²³ August Heisenberg, ed., *Georgii Acropolitae Opera*, 2 vols. (Leipzig: Teubner, 1903).

*Translations**English*

Macrides, Ruth, trans., *George Akropolites: The History*. Oxford Studies in Byzantium. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

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Theodore Skoutariotes

Two similar chronicles have been associated with the name of Theodore Skoutariotes: the *Chronika Parekbolaia* and the *Synopsis Chronike*. The *Synopsis Lambros* is a third text that has much in common with the *Synopsis Chronike*. Skoutariotes had a prominent ecclesiastical career under Michael VIII Palaiologos (1259–1282) and was bishop of Kyzikos from 1277 to 1283. He was deposed by Andronikos II (1282–1328) because he supported Michael VIII's efforts at union between the Catholic and Orthodox churches. Skoutariotes owned a rich library and is known from the notes in his collection of manuscripts.¹

Chronika Parekbolaia

This text runs from Adam to the death of Alexios Komnenos in 1118. It is found in *Vaticanus Graecus 1889* and is known as the *Chronika Parekbolaia* from its title and first word of its subtitle: *Chronika – Parekbolaia syntetmēmēna apo tou Adam achri kai tēs basileias tou Alexiou tou Komnenou diexionta osoi te basileis kai osoi patriarchai gegonasin* (Chronology: Excerpts hewn together recounting how many emperors and patriarchs there were from Adam until Alexios Komnenos).² A comparison of the handwriting of the chronicle with other annotations known to have been made by Skoutariotes in *Parisinus Graecus 1741*, indicates that the text in *Vaticanus Graecus 1889* was written by Skoutariotes himself.³ Raimondo Tocci

¹ Raimondo Tocci, ed., *Theodori Scutariotae chronica: editio princeps*, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 46 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 64–101; Raimondo Tocci, “Bemerkungen zur Hand des Theodoros Skutariotes,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 99, no. 1 (2006): 127–44; Konstantinos Zafeiris, “The ‘Synopsis Chronike’ and Its Place in the Byzantine Chronicle Tradition: Its Sources (Creation–1081 CE)” (D.Phil. diss., University of St Andrews, 2007), 24–26, www.research-repository.st-andrews.ac.uk/handle/10023/457.

² Tocci, *Theodori Scutariotae chronica*, 5.

³ Tocci, “Bemerkungen zur Hand des Theodoros Skutariotes”; Tocci, *Theodori Scutariotae chronica*, 103–11.

considers Skoutariotes to have been the author/compiler of the chronicle and believes that the *Chronika Parekbolaia* was an initial draft of the *Synopsis Chronike*.⁴ Tocci dates the composition of *Chronika Parekbolaia* to between 1270 and 1280.⁵ The sources seem to have been similar, but perhaps not identical, to those used by Zonaras, Manasses, and Glykas.⁶ Zafeiris offers a detailed analysis of potential sources.⁷

Synopsis Chronike

The text known as the *Synopsis Chronike*, “Summary Chronicle,” is found in *Marcianus Graecus 407*, a manuscript dated to the 1340s.⁸ It was first published by Constantine Sathas, and is sometimes called the “Synopsis Sathas.” This chronicle runs from Adam through 1261. It briefly discusses reigns from Adam through Nikephoros Botaneiates (1078–1081). Then from Alexios I (1081–1118) to Michael VIII Palaiologos’s reconquest of Constantinople in 1261, it provides a detailed exposition of politics. A description of the Seven Wonders of the World and seven ancient sages is interposed before the beginning of the Christian empire under Constantine, and a law of Alexios Komnenos is inserted into the discussion of his reign.⁹

The main source for the *Synopsis Chronike* is the *Chronika Parekbolaia*. The only material not originating in the *Chronika Parekbolaia* are the digressions on the Wonders of the World, the ancient sages, and Alexios’s law, and material from Niketas Choniates and George Akropolites for the period between 1081 and 1261.¹⁰ Sakel speculates that a now-lost chronicle was a source for the *Synopsis Chronike*, Zonaras, and an extension of the Chronicle of the Logothete found in *Marcianus Graecus 608*.¹¹ Some passages in the opening sections of the *Synopsis Chronike* seem to derive from the same source as the chronicles found in *Patmiacus Graecus 132*

⁴ Tocci, *Theodori Scutariotae chronica*, 102–15; Raimondo Tocci, “Zu Genese und Kompositionsvorgang der Συνοψις Χρονική des Theodoros Skutariotes,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 98, no. 2 (2006): 551–68.

⁵ Tocci, *Theodori Scutariotae chronica*, 115.

⁶ Paul Magdalino, “Byzantine Historical Writing, 900–1400,” in *The Oxford History of Historical Writing*, ed. Sarah Foot, Chase F. Robinson, and Daniel R. Woolf (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 2: 226; Dean Sakel, “Another User of the Lost Source of Scutariotes,” *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 62 (2013): 139–44.

⁷ Zafeiris, “The ‘Synopsis Chronike’ and Its Place in the Byzantine Chronicle Tradition,” 33–317.

⁸ Tocci, *Theodori Scutariotae chronica*, 66.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Tocci, “Zu Genese und Kompositionsvorgang der Συνοψις Χρονική des Theodoros Skutariotes,” 568.

¹¹ Sakel, “Another User of the Lost Source of Scutariotes.” Tocci, *Theodori Scutariotae chronica*, 83–85.

and *Vindobonensis Historicus Graecus* 99, although the relationship between these texts needs further study.¹²

The author claimed in the preface of the *Synopsis Chronike* that nothing in his text was an original composition and that readers could attribute the authorship to whomever they wished.¹³ In 1901, August Heisenberg suggested that the author was Theodore Skoutariotes, bishop of Kyzikos, on the basis of marginal notes within the manuscript that state his ownership.¹⁴ Konstantinos Zafeiris has recently cast doubt on that identification. In addition to interpreting the note as indicating ownership rather than authorship, and general skepticism, he argues that the history does not reflect the unionist leanings of Skoutariotes's political career.¹⁵ Tocci has added new arguments in favor of Skoutariotes's authorship and sees his career as having two phases: first as a pro-union church politician under Michael VIII, and then as an Orthodox historian under Andronikos II.¹⁶ Tocci suggests that the research for it began after 1283, when Skoutariotes was deposed as bishop.¹⁷

Synopsis Lambros

This text, named after its unpublished edition by Lambros, is found in *Dionysiou* 224 [*Athonensis* 3758]. Folios 610r–611v contain a chronicle from Adam to the biblical patriarch Rehoboam matching the opening of *Synopsis Chronike*.¹⁸ On folios 543v–607v is a chronicle from Adam to 1261 that has a great deal in common with the *Synopsis Chronike*, but also some

¹² Tocci, *Theodori Scutariotae chronica*, 83–85; Sakel, “Another User of the Lost Source of Scutariotes”; Dean Sakel, “Codex Patmiacus graecus 132 and the Chronicle of Scutariotes,” in *Atti dell’X Simposio di Efeso su s. Giovanni Apostolo*, ed. Luigi Padovese (Rome: Istituto francescano di spiritualità, 2005), 131–326; Zafeiris, “The ‘Synopsis Chronike’ and Its Place in the Byzantine Chronicle Tradition,” 228–34.

¹³ Konstantinos N. Sathas, “Anonymou Synopsis Chronike,” in *Mesaiōnikē vivliothēkē*, vol. 7 (Venice: Typois tou Chronou, 1894), 3. Quoted in Apostolos D. Karpozilos, “The Authorial Statements in the Ecclesiastical History of Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos,” in *Myriobiblos: Essays on Byzantine Literature and Culture*, ed. Theodora Antonopoulou, Sofia Kotzabassi, and Marina Loukaki, Byzantinisches Archiv 29 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 191. Further discussion: Tocci, “Zu Genese und Kompositionsvorgang der Συνοπτις Χρονικη des Theodoros Skutariotes,” 555–56.

¹⁴ August Heisenberg, *Analecta: Mitteilungen aus italienischen Handschriften byzantinischer Chronographen* (Munich: Lindl, 1901), 14–16.

¹⁵ Zafeiris, “The ‘Synopsis Chronike’ and Its Place in the Byzantine Chronicle Tradition,” 24–31; Konstantinos Zafeiris, “The Issue of the Authorship of the Synopsis Chronike and Theodore Skoutariotes,” *Revue des études Byzantines* 69, no. 1 (2011): 253–63.

¹⁶ Tocci, “Zu Genese und Kompositionsvorgang der Συνοπτις Χρονικη des Theodoros Skutariotes,” 552; Tocci, *Theodori Scutariotae chronica*, 64–65, 102–11.

¹⁷ Tocci, *Theodori Scutariotae chronica*, 111.

¹⁸ Zafeiris, “The ‘Synopsis Chronike’ and Its Place in the Byzantine Chronicle Tradition,” 187.

differences.¹⁹ The section matching the *Synopsis Chronike* labels Theodore of Kyzikos as its author. Tocci takes this to be a further indication that Theodore Skoutariotes, bishop of Kyzikos, wrote the *Synopsis Chronike*, while Zafeiris notes that it could refer to a different Theodore from Kyzikos other than Theodore Skoutariotes.²⁰ Zafeiris argues that this is not a copy of the *Synopsis Chronike*, but a separate text, and that both derive from a common source.²¹

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

The *Chroniki Parekbolaia* is in *Vaticanus Graecus 1889*, dated 1270–1280.²² The *Synopsis Chronike* is found in *Marcianus Graecus 407*, a manuscript compiled in the 1340s. The detailed section of the *Synopsis Chronike*, from 1118–1261, is also found in *Taurin B. V. 13*, of the fifteenth or sixteenth century and *Escorial Y.I. 4* [*Graecus 243*] of the sixteenth century. *Ambrosianus Graecus 820*, also of the sixteenth century, contains the history of George Akropolites, but supplements that history with material found in the *Synopsis Chronike*.²³

Edition (of the *Synopsis Chronike*)

Tocci, Raimondo, ed. *Theodori Scutariotae chronica: editio princeps*. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 46. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015.

The *Synopsis Chronike* was first published, on the basis of *Marcianus Graecus 407*, in: Sathas, Kōnstantinos N. “Anonymou *Synopsis Chronikē*.” In *Mesaionikē vivliothēkē*, Vol. 7. Venice: Typois tou Chronou, 1894.

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¹⁹ Tocci, *Theodori Scutariotae chronica*, 71–80.

²⁰ Ibid., 80–83; Zafeiris, “The ‘*Synopsis Chronike*’ and Its Place in the Byzantine Chronicle Tradition,” 28, 187–202.

²¹ Zafeiris, “The ‘*Synopsis Chronike*’ and Its Place in the Byzantine Chronicle Tradition,” 187–202.

²² Tocci, *Theodori Scutariotae chronica*, 47–53.

²³ Ibid., 67.

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- "Zu Genese und Kompositionsvorgang der Συνοπτις Χρονικη des Theodoros Skutariotes." *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 98, no. 2 (2005): 551–68.
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George Pachymeres

The *History* by George Pachymeres is a long and detailed history covering 1260–1307 in thirteen books. This text picks up where George Akropolites's history ended. Pachymeres composed the *History* at the end of the thirteenth century or the beginning of the fourteenth century.¹ At 1355 printed pages for forty-seven years, this is one of our most exhaustive histories. It includes numerous speeches and fine-grained descriptions of theological and political controversies.

The first six books cover the reign of Michael VIII Palaiologos (1259–1282), while the next seven are devoted to his successor, Andronikos II Palaiologos (1282–1328). Pachymeres presents a relatively critical assessment of these two emperors, whom he considered to be unequal to the task of remedying the empire's increasingly precarious position. Pachymeres describes the empire as facing dire confrontations with the Latin West and the Turks in the East. He seems particularly concerned by the Turks, whose movement into Asia Minor he describes in detail. A host of other problems, including financial troubles, a refugee crisis sparked by the Turkish advance, and ecclesiastical controversies that further weakened the empire's position, are prominent themes in the *History*. Pachymeres also gives considerable attention to the topic of imperial marriages, and, drawing from his experiences as a church official, ecclesiastical developments such as the Arsenite controversy and the dispute over union with the Catholic Church.² The individual chapters have titles, which can provide some guidance to the contents of the whole.³

¹ Albert Failler, ed., *Georges Pachymères Relations historiques: Livres I–III*, trans. Vitalien Laurent, vol. 1, *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* 24 (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1984), xx.

² Herbert Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner: Philosophie, Rhetorik, Epistolographie, Geschichtsschreibung, Geographie*, vol. 1, *Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft*, 12.5 (Munich: Beck, 1978), 1: 447–53; Failler, *Relations historiques*, 1: xx; Stylianos Lampakis, "Some Considerations on the Historiographical Work of Georgios Pachymeres," *Vyzantina Symmeikta* 16 (2008): 133–38.

³ This table of contents is in Albert Failler, ed., *Georges Pachymères relations historiques*, 1:2–21.

As he states in his *History*, George Pachymeres was born in 1242 in Nicaea. He arrived in the Constantinople to begin his higher education in 1261, right after the city was conquered by Michael Palaeologos.⁴ A member of the clergy – perhaps serving as a deacon – Pachymeres was appointed to several ecclesiastical offices within the Patriarchate, including that of *protekdikos*, and attained the lay office of *dikaiophylax*.⁵ Pachymeres was also a teacher, as one of his students, Manuel Philes, attested in an autobiographical poem. Philes also mentions that Pachymeres was an expert in law, rhetoric, and philosophy.⁶ In addition to the *History*, several other of Pachymeres's writings have survived, including a Quadrivium, parts of a twelve-book edition of Aristotle, a rhetorical work, three letters, and four poems.⁷ Because his *History* ends in 1308, and no biographical information after this date has come to light, it is generally believed that Pachymeres died around the year 1310.⁸

Pachymeres frequently makes classical references in his work, especially allusions to Greek mythology, and his writing style imitates that of the ancient Greek historical authors.⁹ Scholars have also noted that he often leaves the chronological sequence of events unclear, particularly in the first half of the work.¹⁰ Pachymeres describes his own participation in events

⁴ Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur*, 1:447. Hunger believes that Pachymeres was a student of the philosopher-historian George Akropolites. Arnakis, in contrast, suggests that he studied under Gregory of Cyprus. See George Georgiades Arnakis, "George Pachymeres: Byzantine Humanist," *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 12, no. 2 (1966): 162. Gregory of Cyprus was himself a student of Akropolites. See Ruth Macrides, trans., *George Akropolites: The History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 12–13.

⁵ Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur*, 1: 447; Pantélis Golitsis, "Georges Pachymère comme didascale. Essai pour une reconstruction de sa carrière et de son enseignement philosophique," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 58 (2008): 62–64; Failler, *Georges Pachymères Relations historiques*, 1: xix–xx. Hunger, Failler, and Golitsis state that Pachymeres was a deacon; Arnakis is uncertain of this claim.

⁶ Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur*, 1:447. On Pachymeres's teaching, see also Golitsis, "Georges Pachymère comme didascale," 54–60.

⁷ Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur*, 1:447; Arnakis, "George Pachymeres," 162; Failler, *Georges Pachymères Relations historiques*, 1:xxi–xxii.

⁸ Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur*, 1:447; Arnakis, "George Pachymeres," 163; Golitsis, "Georges Pachymère comme didascale," 54. On Pachymeres's life, also see Paul Magdalino, "Byzantine Historical Writing, 900–1400," in *The Oxford History of Historical Writing*, ed. Sarah Foot, Chase F. Robinson, and Daniel R. Woolf (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 2: 230–31.

⁹ Arnakis, "George Pachymeres," 163–64.

¹⁰ On Pachymeres' chronology, see Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur*, 1: 450; Albert Failler, "Chronologie et composition dans l'Histoire de Georges Pachymère," *Revue des études Byzantines* 38, no. 1 (1980): 5–103; Albert Failler, "Chronologie et composition dans l'Histoire de Georges Pachymère," *Revue des études Byzantines* 39, no. 1 (1981): 145–249; Albert Failler, "Chronologie et composition dans l'histoire de Georges Pachymères (Livres VII–XIII)," *Revue des études Byzantines* 48 (1990): 5–87; Pia Schmid, "Zur Chronologie von Pachymeres, Andronikos L. II–VII," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 51 (1958): 82–86; Jean Verpeaux, "Notes chronologiques sur les livres II et III du 'De Andronico Palaeologo' de Pachymère," *Revue des études Byzantines* 17, no. 1 (1959): 168–73; Andreas

from time to time throughout the *History*, and draws frequently on his status as an eyewitness.¹¹

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

The text of the *History* has been transmitted through three manuscripts, two of which are in two volumes:

- 1) *Monacensis Graecus 442* (356 folios)
- 2) *Barberinus Graecus 198* (books 1–6, 248 folios) and *Barberinus Graecus 199* (books 7–13, 181 folios)
- 3) *Barberinus Graecus 203* (books 1–6, 134 folios) and *Barberinus Graecus 204* (books 7–13, 212 folios)

Each manuscript has been dated to the 1360s. Although all three have lacunae and areas of corruption, the *Barberinus Graecus 203–204* is considered the most accurate and complete. An abridged version of the *History*, much shorter and more simplified, is preserved in two manuscripts: *Vaticanus Graecus 1775* and *Alexandrinus 99*. Both manuscripts originate in the early years of the fifteenth century.¹²

Edition

Failler, Albert and Vitalien Laurent, eds. *Relations historiques. Vol. 1–2, Livres I–III*. Translated by Albert Failler and Vitalien Laurent. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 24. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1984.

Failler, Albert, ed. *Relations historiques. Vol. 3–4, Livres VII–XIII*. Translated by Albert Failler. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 24. Paris: Institute français d'études byzantines, 1999.

Kiesewetter, "Bermerkungen zur Chronologie von Buch IX des Geschichtswerks des Georgios Pachymeres (De Andronico Palaeologo III)," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 89, no. 1 (1996): 45–54.

¹¹ Failler, *Georges Pachymères Relations historiques*, 1: xx; Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur*, 1: 448.

¹² On the manuscript tradition of Pachymeres's *History*, see especially Albert Failler, "La tradition manuscrite de l'Histoire de Georges Pachymère (Livres I–VI)," *Revue des études Byzantines* 37 (1979): 123–220; Albert Failler, "La tradition manuscrite de l'histoire de Georges Pachymères (Livres VII–XIII)," *Revue des études Byzantines* 47 (1989): 91–181; Albert Failler, ed., *La version brève des relations historiques de Georges Pachymères. I. Livres I–VI*, vol. 1, Archives de l'Orient chrétien 17 (Paris: Institut français d'études byzantines, 2001), x–xii; Vitalien Laurent, "Les manuscrits de l'histoire byzantine de Georges Pachymère," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 5 (1929): 129–205; Vitalien Laurent, "Deux nouveaux manuscrits de l' 'Histoire byzantine' de Georges Pachymère," *Byzantion* 11 (1936): 43–57.

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Failler, Albert, ed. *La version brève des relations historiques de Georges Pachymères*, 3 vols., Archives de l'Orient chrétien 17–19. Paris: Institut français d'études byzantines, 2001.

Publication History

Pierre Poussines published an edition and Latin translation of the books covering Michael Palaeologos in 1666 and the books on Andronikos 1669.¹³ Poussines's edition was reprinted in the Venice Corpus in 1729. Immanuel Bekker revised the text for the Bonn Corpus, based on previous editions.¹⁴ The *Patrologia Graeca* reprinted Bekker's edition.¹⁵

Translations

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English (Partial)

Cassidy, Nathan. "A Translation and Historical Commentary on Book One and Book Two of the Historia of George Pachymeres." PhD diss., University of Western Australia, 2005.

¹³ Pierre Poussines, ed., *Georgii Pachymeris Michael Palaeologus sive Historia rerum a Michaele Palaeologo ante imperium, & in imperio gestarum.* (Rome: Typis Barberinis, 1666). *Georgii Pachymeris Andronicus Palaeologus sive Historia rerum ab Andronico seniore in imperio gestarum ad annum ejus aetatis undequingagesimum.* (Rome: Typis Barberinis, 1669).

¹⁴ Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Georgii Pachymeris de Michaele et Andronico palaeologis libri tredecim*, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 24–25 (Bonn: Weber, 1835).

¹⁵ Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, vols. 143–44 (Paris: Apud J.-P. Migne, 1865).

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Nikephoros Gregoras

The *History of the Romans* by Nikephoros Gregoras is a detailed classifying history in thirty-seven books.¹ It begins in the year 1204, when Constantinople was captured in the Fourth Crusade, and ends in 1358 or 1359.² The first seven books cover 1204–1320, drawing from Akropolites and Pachymeres. Thereafter the text becomes a detailed continuation of Pachymeres's history.³ It includes an exhaustive account of the hesychast controversy and the synod of 1351, in which Gregoras opposed the hesychast theology of Gregory Palamas. Books 30–35 deal primarily with Gregoras's theological stance. Unlike most works of Byzantine historiography, Gregoras included extensive discussions of astronomy and geography. The *History of the Romans* was left unfinished at the author's death.⁴

The dates of composition of Gregoras's history are a matter of speculation. Van Dieten has suggested it was written between the 1330s and 1350s, contemporaneously with many of the later events described in the narrative.⁵

Gregoras's own works are the chief source for his biography. The following account, ultimately derived from Gregoras's self-description, reflects how he would have liked to be remembered. He was born in the 1290's to a family about whom little is known.⁶ Following the death of his parents before his tenth birthday, he was brought up by his uncle,

¹ It is about 480 printed pages in van Dieten's translation. Jan Louis van Dieten, trans. *Nikephoros Gregoras. Rhomäische Geschichte = Historia Rhomaïke*. 6 vols. Bibliothek der griechischen Literatur 4, 8, 9, 24, 39, 59, 66. (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1973–2000).

² van Dieten, trans., *Nikephoros Gregoras*, 1:36; Rodolphe Guiland, *Essai sur Nicéphore Grégoras: l'homme et l'oeuvre*, (Paris: Geuthner, 1926), 229.

³ Guiland, *Essai sur Nicéphore Grégoras*, 229.

⁴ van Dieten, *Rhomäische Geschichte*, 1: 36–43; Guiland, *Essai sur Nicéphore Grégoras*, 229–30.

⁵ van Dieten, *Rhomäische Geschichte*, 1:37–40.

⁶ Regarding Gregoras's date of birth, see Vasile Grecu, "Das Geburtsjahr des byzantinischen Geschichtsschreibers Nikephoros Gregoras," *Bulletin de la section historique de l'Académie roumaine* 27 (1946): 56–61.

Bishop John of Heraclea Pontica, who provided him with an education in theology and philosophy. He continued his studies in Constantinople under Patriarch John XIII Glykys. Subsequently, Gregoras enjoyed the patronage of Theodore Metochites, advisor to the Emperor Andronikos II. Under Metochites, Gregoras studied many subjects, including philosophy and astronomy; in return, Gregoras tutored Metochites's children. At the age of twenty-seven, Gregoras had his first audience with Emperor Andronikos II (1282–1328). At Andronikos's request, he participated in a scholarly convention investigating the date of Easter in 1324, and in 1326 journeyed to Serbia with an official embassy to King Stefan Uroš III Dečanski. During this time, Gregoras continued his academic studies and published profusely on a wide variety of theological and scientific subjects. He also had a successful school and by age thirty was considered one of the leading intellectuals of his day.⁷

In 1328, Andronikos II was deposed by his grandson, Andronikos III (1328–1341). As a result of his friendship with the previous emperor, Gregoras was stripped of all of his holdings but allowed to remain in Constantinople. He spent part of the next years defending his astronomical theories from various detractors, and successfully predicted several solar eclipses. In 1331, he became involved in an even larger intellectual battle, sparked by the rising popularity of the Greek-Italian monk, Barlaam, a western-educated theologian who traveled to Constantinople. In two face-to-face debates with Barlaam, Gregoras emerged victorious (according to Gregoras) and was celebrated as the intellectual champion of Byzantium. Over the next decade, Gregoras lectured, wrote, and conducted scientific work. He eventually won the favor of Andronikos III, whom he tried to convince to halt ongoing union negotiations with the Roman Church.⁸

Following Andronikos III's death in 1341, the empire was wracked by a six-year civil war that pitted Dowager Empress Anna of Savoy against John Kantakouzenos. During this time, the Hesychast controversy – between those who subscribed to the theology of Gregory Palamas and those who considered his views heretical – created further divisions.⁹ In 1347, Kantakouzenos, a Palamas supporter, emerged victorious in the civil war.

⁷ van Dieten, *Rhomäische Geschichte* 1:1–7; Guiland, *Essai sur Nicéphore Grégoras*, 3–13.

⁸ van Dieten, *Rhomäische Geschichte*, 1973, 1:7–14; Guiland, *Essai sur Nicéphore Grégoras*, 13–22. According to Guiland, Gregoras was successful in halting the union negotiations. van Dieten suggests that they continued even after Gregoras's intervention.

⁹ See Lowell Clucas, "The Hesychast Controversy in Byzantium in the Fourteenth Century: A Consideration of the Basic Evidence" (PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1975).

Owing to the long-standing friendship between them, Katakouzenos initially remained on good terms with Gregoras and even offered him the patriarch's seat in 1349, which Gregoras declined. Their friendship soon became strained as Gregoras took the monk's habit and became a leader of the anti-Palamist opposition. During the synod of 1351, Gregoras and his supporters fought for what they considered orthodox theology, but the synod upheld Palamas's doctrine. When Gregoras refused to cease his vocal opposition, the emperor put him under house arrest at the Chora monastery.¹⁰

In November 1354, Katakouzenos was removed from the throne by John V Palaiologos. The new emperor freed Gregoras from house arrest and, at Gregoras's urging, considered opening a new investigation into Palamas's teachings. Ultimately, however, the emperor declined to do so. In 1355, the emperor brought Gregoras to the court to discuss theology with Palamas. The emperor chose not to overturn previous decisions in favor of Palamas, however, and Gregoras spent much of the rest of his life carrying on a rearguard action with a series of anti-Palamas publications. Gregoras died around the year 1360, having failed to reverse the Orthodox Church's position. The followers of Palamas dragged his corpse through the streets of the capital.¹¹ Over the course of his lifetime, Gregoras also wrote numerous works in addition to the *History of the Romans*, including panegyrics, studies of math, musicology, and astronomy, philosophical treatises, and a range of theological works.¹²

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

Various sections of the text have survived in separate manuscripts, the oldest of which date from the fourteenth century. The first eleven books are in *Vaticanus Graecus 165*, *Marcianus Graecus 405*, *Matritensis Graecus 4789*, and *Laudianus Graecus 24*. The books covering the middle part of

¹⁰ van Dieten, *Rhömische Geschichte*, 1973, 1:14–26; Guiland, *Essai sur Nicéphore Grégoras*, 23–38. On Gregoras's role in these debates, see Hans-Veit Beyer, "Nikephoros Gregoras als Theologe und sein erstes Auftreten gegen die Hesychasten," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 20 (1971): 171–88; Teresa Hart, "Nicephorus Gregoras: Historian of the Hesychast Controversy," *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 2, no. 2 (1951): 169–79.

¹¹ van Dieten, *Rhömische Geschichte*, 1973, 1:26–35; Guiland, *Essai sur Nicéphore Grégoras*, 38–54.

¹² See van Dieten, *Rhömische Geschichte*, 1973, 1:44–62.

the history are contained in *Codex Vaticanus Graecus 164*, *Codex Genevensis 35*, and the *Genfer Codex*, while the final books are in *Codex Parisinus Graecus 1276*, *Codex Vaticanus Graecus 1095*, *Codex Parisinus Graecus 3075*, and *Hafnisesis 1986*. Sections of the text can be found in a variety of other manuscripts.¹³

Edition

We lack a critical edition of this text. Jan Louis van Dieten had made progress toward a critical edition but was unable to complete this work before his death. His translation was made in consultation with the extant manuscripts as part of his preparations for the edition. The only currently published edition is that in the Bonn Corpus which was made on the basis of transcripts of three of the manuscripts: *Vaticanus Graecus 1095*, *Paris Graecus 1276* and *3075*.¹⁴

Publication History

Hieronymus Wolf undertook an edition of the first eleven books, based on *Laudianus Graecus 24* and *Monacensis Graecus 153*, which was published in 1562 and in various reprints.¹⁵ An Italian translation appeared in Venice in 1569. Jean Boivin de Villeneuve's edition of the first twenty-four books, based on Wolf's edition and a number of different manuscripts, was published in the Paris Corpus in 1702 in two volumes and reprinted in Venice in 1729.¹⁶ The first complete edition of all thirty-seven books was published in the Bonn Corpus between 1829 and 1855, edited by Ludwig Schopen and Immanuel Bekker. The Bonn Corpus edition was reprinted in *Patrologia Graeca*.¹⁷

¹³ Jan Louis van Dieten, "Entstehung und Überlieferung der Historia Rhomaike des Nikephoros Gregoras: Insbesondere des ersten Teiles: Lib. I–XI" (PhD diss., Cologne University, 1975); Jan Louis van Dieten, ed., *Nikephoros Gregoras. Rhomäische Geschichte = Historia Rhomaike*, trans. Jan Louis van Dieten, 7 vols. (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1973), 2:2–3.

¹⁴ van Dieten, trans., *Nikephoros Gregoras, Rhomäische Geschichte/ Historia Rhomaike*, Bibliothek der griechischen Literatur 4, 8, 9, 24, 38 (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1973), 1: VII–VIII.

¹⁵ Hieronymus Wolf, ed., *Nicephori Gregorae, Romanae, hoc est Byzantinae historiae Libri XI* (Basel: Oporinus, 1562).

¹⁶ Jean Boivin de Villeneuve, ed., *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina historia*, 2 vols. (Paris: Ex Typographia Regia, 1702).

¹⁷ Immanuel Bekker and Ludwig Schopen, eds., *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina historia: Graece et Latine*, 3 vols., Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 6–8 (Bonn: Weber, 1829–1855). Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, vols. 148–49 (Paris: Apud J.-P. Migne, 1865).

Translation

German

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Ephraim

The *Chronographia* of Ephraim is a chronicle in twelve-syllable verse of 9,588 lines covering Roman history from the reign of Gaius Caligula to 1261.¹ It survives in one manuscript and a seventeenth-century copy. The title page and approximately the first seventy-five lines are lost.²

The narrative focuses largely on secular imperial history and becomes increasingly detailed as it moves toward the thirteenth century. For early emperors, the discussions are brief and mostly concern aspects of their characters: Caligula, for example, was amoral and bloodthirsty, while Nerva was noble and ruled well, despite being non-Christian.³ From Diocletian (284–305) through Nikephoros III Botaneiates (1078–1081) the text offers a narrative with greater depth. Each emperor is afforded roughly fifty to 200 lines each.⁴ From Alexios I Komnenos (1081–1118) onward, the text expands to include detailed discussions of politics.⁵ This pacing reflects that of the main sources, Zonaras, Choniates, and Akropolites.⁶

The manuscript, *Vaticanus 1003*, contains the two historical works attributed to Ephraim, the *Chronographia* and the *Catalog of the Patriarchs of Constantinople*, both written in twelve-syllabus verse.⁷ Various catalogs of the Vatican library from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries list the manuscript as the work of Ephraim of Ainos.⁸ The *Catalog of the Patriarchs of Constantinople* is a list of patriarchs that ends with the reign of Isaias

¹ For a metrical analysis see: Odysseus Lampsidis, *Beiträge zum byzantinischen Chronisten Ephraem und zu seiner Chronik* (Athens, 1971), 84–108.

² Odysseus Lampsidēs, *Ephraim tou Ainiou Chronographia* (Athens: Kentron Ekdoseōs Ergōn Hellēnōn Syngrapheōn, 1984), 9.

³ *Ibid.*, 1:1–19, 53–63.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 1:13–121.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 1:121–2:309.

⁶ Lampsidis, *Beiträge zum byzantinischen Chronisten Ephraem und zu seiner Chronik*, 42–55, 109–238.

⁷ Lampsidēs, *Ephraim tou Ainiou Chronographia*, 8.

⁸ Lampsidis, *Beiträge zum byzantinischen Chronisten Ephraem und zu seiner Chronik*, 16–24; Odysseus Lampsidis, “Ennius-Ainios,” *Byzantion* 43 (1973): 510–11.

(1323–1334), indicating that the author lived until at least 1323. Lampsidēs suggests that Ephraim was born in the last decades of the thirteenth century and lived at least until the 1440s.⁹

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

The text is known from *Vaticanus 1003* of the fourteenth century and *Barberinianus 146* of the seventeenth century, which is a direct copy of the former.¹⁰

Editions

Lampsidēs, Odysseus ed. *Ephraim tou Ainiou Chronographia*. Athens: Kentron Ekdoseōs Ergōn Hellēnōn Syngrapheōn, 1984.

Publication History

Angelo Mai published an edition and translation into Latin in 1828.¹¹ Mai's edition and translation were reprinted in the Bonn Corpus in 1840¹² and again in the *Patrologia Graeca* in 1865.¹³

Translations

Greek

Lampsidēs, Odysseus ed. *Ephraim tou Ainiou Chronographia*. Athens: Kentron Ekdoseōs Ergōn Hellēnōn Syngrapheōn, 1984.

Starting Point

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⁹ Lampsidēs, *Ephraim tou Ainiou Chronographia*, 9; Lampsidēs, *Beiträge zum byzantinischen Chronisten Ephraem und zu seiner Chronik*, 27–30.

¹⁰ Lampsidēs, *Ephraim tou Ainiou Chronographia*, 9; Lampsidēs, *Beiträge zum byzantinischen Chronisten Ephraem und zu seiner Chronik*, 30–37.

¹¹ Angelo Mai, *Scriptorum Veterum Nova Collectio Tomus III* (Rome: Typis Vaticanis, 1828).

¹² Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Ephraemius*, trans. Angelo Mai, *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae* 43 (Bonn: Weber, 1840).

¹³ Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, vol. 143 (Paris: Apud J-P Migne, 1865).

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Constantine Akropolites the Grand Logothete

A brief chronicle of Roman history from Aeneas to 1323 or 1341 survives in *Vindobonensis Historicus Graecus* 99, folios 151–351. The presentation of events is brief throughout the text, and after Alexios Komnenos, the last two centuries are a simple list of the emperors' reigns.¹

An examination of the text's discussion of emperors Philippikos and Anastasios indicates that it draws on the work of Zonaras. Further study is needed to determine whether this dependency is consistent for the rest of the chronicle.²

The text has “of the lord Akropolites Grand Logothete” written in the margin at the head of the chronicle.³ On chronological grounds, Heinrich associated this text with Constantine Akropolites (1250/1255–ca. 1324/1325), who was the older son of George Akropolites and held the title of Grand Logothete.⁴ He died between 1321 and 1324, and is known mostly as the author of hagiography.⁵ He composed numerous lives of saints of earlier eras in high-style Greek.⁶ Yet, the literary style of the chronicle is far simpler and less elegant than Constantine Akropolites's other writings, suggesting that perhaps this association is unwarranted.⁷

¹ Raimondo Tocci, “Zu der Konstantinos Akropolites zugeschriebenen Chronik,” in *Koinotaton Doron: das späte Byzanz zwischen Machtlosigkeit und kultureller Blüte (1204–1461)*, ed. Albrecht Berger, Sergei Mariev, Günter Prinzing, and Alexander Riehle, 197–206. *Byzantinisches Archiv* 31 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 199.

² *Ibid.*, 200–5.

³ *Ibid.*, 198.

⁴ Alfred Heinrich, *Die Chronik des Johannes Sikeliota der Wiener Hofbibliothek* (Graz: Verlag des K. K. ersten Staats-Gymnasiums, 1892), 10; Tocci, “Zu der Konstantinos Akropolites zugeschriebenen Chronik,” 198.

⁵ Donald M. Nicol, “Constantine Akropolites: A Prosopographical Note,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 19 (1965): 253.

⁶ For a list of all of Akropolites's works see: *Ibid.*, 254–56.

⁷ Tocci, “Zu der Konstantinos Akropolites zugeschriebenen Chronik,” 199–205.

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscript

Vindobonensis Historicus Graecus 99 can be dated to the first half of the fourteenth century.⁸

Edition

A new edition is being prepared by Albrecht Berger. An edition of the preface and four short excerpts was published by Heinrich:

Heinrich, Alfred. *Die Chronik des Johannes Sikeliota der Wiener Hofbibliothek*. Graz: Verlag des K. K. ersten Staats-Gymnasiums, 1892.

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On This Text

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On Constantine Akropolites

Kotzabassi, Sofia. "Reconsidering the Letters of Constantine Akropolites." In *Myriobiblos. Essays on Byzantine Literature and Culture*, edited by Theodora Antonopoulou, 211–16. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015.

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Nicol, Donald M. "Constantine Akropolites: A Prosopographical Note." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 19 (1965): 253.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 198.

Chronicle of Morea

The *Chronicle of Morea* is a history of the Frankish Peloponnese, focusing on the Principality of Morea in the thirteenth century. It survives in a Greek verse version and French, Italian, and Aragonese prose versions. The diverse versions of the history reflect the cultural mixture of the society in which the text was composed. The Greek and Italian manuscripts end in 1292. The French version ends in 1333 and the Aragonese version runs from 1200–1377.¹

In most of the extant manuscripts, the *Chronicle* opens with a prologue describing the beginnings of the Crusades, including the events of the Fourth Crusade and the sack of Constantinople. It then describes the Crusaders' conquest of the Peloponnese and the formation of the principality of Morea. Thereafter follows an account of its government under Geoffrey I de Villehardouin (1209/10–1229) and his successors, up to the reign of Isabelle de Villehardouin. One manuscript also covers the war of succession that followed Isabelle's death.² The *Chronicle* includes a great deal of information regarding court proceedings, council deliberations, and diplomacy, alongside political and military developments in the principality of Morea.³

Due to its numerous documented factual errors, the *Chronicle* has been criticized as an unreliable historical source. Teresa Shawcross believes that it nonetheless provides important clues about how history was imagined and reconstructed by contemporaries.⁴

Shawcross argues that the chronicle was most likely begun in the mid-1320s and subsequently enlarged and modified over the following two

¹ Teresa Shawcross, *The Chronicle of Morea: Historiography in Crusader Greece* (Oxford University Press, 2009), 33–39, 263–66.

² *Ibid.*, 22–23.

³ *Ibid.*, 54 and 278–348.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 23–24.

decades.⁵ She sees the text as written during a period of crisis in the principality and representing an attempt to conjure up a mythical past in which Greeks and Latins lived in harmony and forged a new collective identity.⁶ Harold Lurier, however, prefers a slightly earlier date of composition – somewhere between 1304 and 1314.⁷ The text has a high level of detail, and seems not to rely on other sources. This suggests that the author or authors lived in the region it describes and witnessed many of the events in question firsthand.⁸

The *Chronicle of Morea* survives in eight manuscripts. Five of these are in vernacular Greek verse, the oldest of which, *Codex Haviensis 57*, dates from the late fourteenth century. A French prose version is found in a manuscript from the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century. An Italian prose summary of the Greek version is in an eighteenth-century manuscript. The final manuscript, written in a dialect of Aragonese with significant Castilian elements, also in prose, was commissioned by Juan Fernández de Heredia and finished in 1393.

Nothing definitive indicates what the language of the original text was, and determining the language of composition has been a matter of keen, and likely unresolvable, debate.⁹ The most thorough recent study, by Teresa Shawcross, argues for the primacy of the Greek version.¹⁰ This view is also supported by John Schmitt and Michael Jeffreys.¹¹ Harold Lurier, Giuseppe Sparado, and David Jacoby have argued for a French original.¹² Longnon has taken the minority position that the original was composed in Italian.¹³

⁵ *Ibid.*, 24, 43–47, 51–52.

⁶ *Ibid.*, especially 247.

⁷ Harold E. Lurier, ed., *Crusaders as Conquerors: The Chronicle of Morea*, trans. Harold E. Lurier, Records of Civilization Sources and Studies 69 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), 52–53.

⁸ Shawcross, *The Chronicle of Morea*, 24, 43–44, and 47; Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 52.

⁹ On this controversy, see especially Marie-Hélène Blanchet and Guillaume Saint-Guillain, “À propos d’un ouvrage récent sur la Chronique de Morée,” *Byzantion* 83 (2013): 16–22.

¹⁰ Shawcross, *The Chronicle of Morea*, 31–52.

¹¹ Blanchet and Saint-Guillain, “À propos d’un ouvrage,” 16. Schmitt, *The Chronicle of Morea*; Michael J. Jeffreys, “The Chronicle of the Morea: Priority of the Greek Version,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 68, no. 2 (1975): 304–50.

¹² Lurier, *Crusaders as Conquerors*, 37–52; David Jacoby, “Quelques considérations sur les versions de la ‘Chronique de Morée,’” *Journal des savants* 3, no. 1 (1968): 133–89; Giuseppe Sparado, “Studi introduttivi alla Cronaca di Morea. Storia della scoperta del testo e problemi relative ad esso,” *Siculorum Gymnasium* 12 (1959): 125–52.

¹³ Jean Longnon, ed., *Livre de la conquête de la principauté de l’Amorée. Chronique de Morée (1204–1305)*, Société de l’histoire de France. Publications in octavo 353 (Paris: Librairie Renouard, 1911).

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Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos

This text is an ecclesiastical history, beginning with the time of Christ, that survives in one manuscript. The original, complete text continued through to 911 in twenty-three books; however, the last five books have since been lost. The surviving eighteen books take the story of church history up to 610. Xanthopoulos's project was unusual in that no historians had written in the genre of ecclesiastical history since late antiquity, and his efforts seem to have failed to revive the genre.¹

Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos claims authorship of the work in its preface. Most of our knowledge of his biography comes from the opening of his ecclesiastical history. The preface says that he began work on his history at age thirty-six.² He corresponded with Theodore Metochites (1270–1332).³ Nikephoros was a priest at Hagia Sophia; he may also have become a monk prior to his death, but this is uncertain.⁴ He seems to have survived beyond 1326–1327. Xanthopoulos also wrote a variety of works including hagiography, poetry, and commentaries on John Klimax and Gregory Nazianzos.

Xanthopoulos began the project around 1310 and completed it sometime after 1317.⁵ Karpozilos dates it to sometime after 1321 on the grounds that Xanthopoulos mentions repairs made by the emperor to

¹ Paul Magdalino, "Byzantine Historical Writing, 900–1400," in *The Oxford History of Historical Writing*, ed. Sarah Foot, Chase F. Robinson, and Daniel R. Woolf (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 2: 222.

² Albrecht Berger, "Apokyrphen zum Neuen Testament bei Nikephoros Kallistou Xanthopoulos," in *Myriobiblos: Essays on Byzantine Literature and Culture*, ed. Theodora Antonopoulou, Sofia Kotzabassi, and Marina Loukaki, Byzantisches Archiv 29 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 56.

³ Jeffrey Featherstone, "Three More Letters of Nicephorus Callistus Xanthopoulos," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 91, no. 1 (1998): 20–31.

⁴ Apostolos D. Karpozilos, "The Authorial Statements in the Ecclesiastical History of Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos," in *Myriobiblos: Essays on Byzantine Literature and Culture*, ed. Theodora Antonopoulou, Sofia Kotzabassi, and Marina Loukaki, Byzantisches Archiv 29 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 189.

⁵ Berger, "Apokyrphen," 57.

certain buildings at that time.⁶ The text is dedicated to Andronikos II Palaiologos (1282–1328) and while some scholars have understood this dedication as a way to support Andronikos's efforts to repudiate the Union of Lyon,⁷ the contents of the dedication do not specifically refer to that debate.⁸

Xanthopoulos created his narrative using the histories of Eusebius, Socrates, Sozomenos, Theodoret of Cyrus, and Evagrius, as well as hagiography, chronicles, and letters.⁹ He also relied heavily on a collection of church histories in the *Baroccianus Graecus 142*, which contains the histories of Sozomen, Evagrius, and a variety of other excerpts on church history, as well as notes and prayers in Xanthopoulos's own hand.¹⁰

Xanthopoulos claimed in his preface that his history was an original composition based on research of ancient texts, and asserted his own authorship throughout the text, breaking with traditions of authorial anonymity.¹¹ Carl de Boor thought that Nikephoros rewrote a tenth-century church history, rather than composing his own.¹² Gentz argued that, on the contrary, Nikephoros has used a variety of sources available in the patriarchal library in Constantinople.¹³ Many of the texts Xanthopoulos names, however, were not consulted independently, but rather appeared in

⁶ Karpozilos, "The Authorial Statements in the Ecclesiastical History of Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos," 189.

⁷ Friedhelm Winkelmann, "Zur Bedeutung der Kirchengeschichte des Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 44 (1994): 439–47. Sebastiano Panteghini, "Die Kirchengeschichte des Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos," *Ostkirchliche Studien* 58 (2009): 260–66.

⁸ Karpozilos, "The Authorial Statements in the Ecclesiastical History of Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos," 188.

⁹ Berger, "Apokryphen," 55–56; Albrecht Berger, "Nikephoros Kallistou Xanthopoulos und seine Quellen in den Büchern I bis VI," in *Ecclesiastical History and Nikephoros Kallistou Xanthopoulos: Proceedings of the International Symposium, Vienna, 15th–16th December 2011*, ed. Christian Gastgeber and Sebastiano Panteghini. Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Denkschriften 477 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2015), 9–16.

¹⁰ Nigel Wilson, "The Autograph of Nicephorus Callistus Xanthopoulos," *Journal of Theological Studies* 25 (1974): 437–38.

¹¹ Karpozilos, "The Authorial Statements in the Ecclesiastical History of Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos," 187–92.

¹² Carl de Boor, "Zur Kenntnis der Handschriften der griechischen Kirchenhistoriker," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 6 (1884): 478–94; Carl de Boor, "Zur Kirchenhistorischen Litteratur," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 5, no. 1 (1896): 16–23.

¹³ Günter Gentz and Kurt Aland, "Die Quellen der Kirchengeschichte des Nicephorus und ihre Bedeutung für die Konstituierung des Textes der älteren Kirchenhistoriker," *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der Älteren Kirche* 42, no. 1 (1949): 104–41; Günter Gentz, *Die Kirchengeschichte des Nicephorus Callistus Xanthopolus und ihre Quellen, Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur* 98 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1966).

the histories he was using. For instance, he drew most of his early material from Eusebius, but presented himself as using Eusebius's sources directly. Xanthopoulos's information from Josephus, Julius Africanus, and Philo are all in Eusebius, and cited by Eusebius as such.¹⁴ Xanthopoulos abbreviated and made changes to the arrangement of Eusebius's text, but also at times imitated Eusebius's prose style, even in passages not directly modeled on that text.¹⁵

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

Xanthopoulos's history is found in *Vindobonensis Historicus Graecus 8*, written before 1328.¹⁶

Edition

Albrecht Berger, Christian Gastgeber, Sebastiano Panteghini, and Vratislav Zervan are preparing a new edition for the *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae*, Series *Vindobonensis*.¹⁷

Publication History

An edition and Latin translation by Joannis Langi were published in 1553. Langi's edition was reprinted in Paris in 1630 and by Migne in the *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 145–47, in 1865.¹⁸

¹⁴ Karpozilos, "The Authorial Statements in the Ecclesiastical History of Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos," 190.

¹⁵ Sébastien Morlet, "Le projet historiographique de Nicéphore Xanthopoulos face à celui d'Eusèbe de Césarée," in *Ecclesiastical history and Nikephoros Kallistou Xanthopoulos*, ed. Christian Gastgeber and Sebastiano Panteghini, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Denkschriften 477 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2015), 43–58.

¹⁶ Christian Gastgeber, "Nikephoros Xanthopoulos und der Codex unicus seiner Historia ecclesiastica (ÖNB, Cod. historicus graecus 8)," in *Ecclesiastical History and Nikephoros Kallistou Xanthopoulos*, ed. Christian Gastgeber and Sebastiano Panteghini, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Denkschriften 477 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2015), 141–73.

¹⁷ Berger, "Apokyrphen," 55.

¹⁸ Gentz, *Die Kirchengeschichte des Nicephorus Callistus Xanthopulus und ihre Quellen*, XIII. Jacques-Paul Migne, ed. *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, vol. 145–47 (Paris: Apud J.-P. Migne, 1865).

Translations

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¹⁹ For details see: Gentz, *Die Kirchengeschichte*.

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John VI Kantakouzenos

After he had been forced to retire, Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos (1347–1354) wrote a history in which he tried to explain his actions throughout his career. It is an account of political and military affairs, primarily covering the years 1320–1356 in four books. At over 1,700 pages in the Bonn edition for a span of thirty-six years, it is a highly detailed history. The *History* is the only surviving history written by an emperor concerning his own reign.¹

The first book concerns the civil war between Andronikos II and Andronikos III (ca. 1321–1328). It focuses on the friendship between Kantakouzenos and Andronikos III. The second deals with the reign of Andronikos III until 1341. Book 3, the most extensive section of the work, covers events of the 1341–1347 civil war that brought Kantakouzenos to power. The subject of book 4 is the reign of Kantakouzenos himself and subsequent events up to 1356.² The history also contains limited information up to the year 1363. The overarching story is of Kantakouzenos's heroic struggles, his rise to power, and his fall.³

Throughout the text Kantakouzenos describes his actions in the third person.⁴ The text opens with an apparently fictive letter from Neilos asking Christodoulos for a history of the emperors. Christodoulos's reply is the history. After a first paragraph addressed to Neilos, he is not mentioned again until the final lines of the text. This fictional frame allows

¹ Donald M. Nicol, *The Reluctant Emperor: A Biography of John Cantacuzene, Byzantine Emperor and Monk, C. 1295–1383* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 1.

² Martin Hinterberger, *Autobiographische Traditionen in Byzanz*, Wiener Byzantinistische Studien 22 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1999), 326–28.

³ Alexander Kazhdan, "L'Histoire de Cantacuzène en tant qu'oeuvre littéraire," *Byzantion* 50, no. 1 (1980): 286.

⁴ Hinterberger, *Autobiographische Traditionen in Byzanz*, 316–31. Hinterberger has identified one point at which Kantakouzenos breaks into first-person: Ludwig Schopen, ed., *Ioannis Cantacuzeni eximperatoris Historiarum Libri IV*, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 2–4 (Bonn: Weber, 1828), 3: 206.

Kantakouzenos to freely talk about himself and present the history so that he looks good. The manuscript tradition attributes the text to Kantakouzenos, and given the way it narrates events from his perspective, his authorship seems secure.⁵

The *History* constitutes Kantakouzenos's attempt to justify the decisions he made during his time in power. He uses a number of rhetorical strategies to convince the audience that he is a trustworthy narrator and a man of good character. For example, a deliberately limited vocabulary works to make him appear guileless; emphasis on his failures makes the text seem like an anti-panegyric, etc.⁶ Kantakouzenos constructs himself as a tragic hero who fought implacably against evil.⁷

Two forms of the history are extant. The first, represented by the *Bononiensis 2212* and *Parisinus-Coislianus 144* manuscripts, features an afterword, followed by a report on selected events from 1356–1363. In the other manuscripts, the order of these final two sections is reversed.⁸ Kantakouzenos composed the *History* during his retirement as a monk. Based on the 1369 date of *Laurentianus IX 9* manuscript and a statement of the author himself in Book 4, scholars have concluded that all the books were finished by 1369.⁹

Knowledge of the life of John VI Kantakouzenos is provided by the history he wrote, a few items of his official correspondence, the history written by Nikephoros Gregoras, poems, imperial panegyrics, Turkish sources, and brief mentions in other documents.¹⁰ He was born some time in either 1295 or 1296 into a prominent noble family.¹¹ According to his own writings, his father served as governor of Morea for eight years under Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos, and died at the end of this period. Kantakouzenos was probably brought up by his mother, Theodora Palaiologina Angelina Kantakouzene, who was related to the ruling Palaiologos family. At the age of about twenty-three, Kantakouzenos married Eirene Asanina. They had six children: Matthew, Manuel, Andronikos, Maria, Theodora, and

⁵ Hinterberger, *Autobiographische Traditionen in Byzanz*, 317.

⁶ Kazhdan, "L'histoire de Cantacuzène en tant qu'oeuvre littéraire," 312–16, 305.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 316.

⁸ Georgios Fatouros and Tilman Krischer, trans., *Johannes Kantakuzenos: Geschichte*, 2 vols., Bibliothek der griechischen Literatur 17 (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1982) 1:10–11. Paul Magdalino, "Byzantine Historical Writing, 900–1400," in *The Oxford History of Historical Writing*, vol. 2, ed. Sarah Foot, Chase F. Robinson, and Daniel R. Woolf (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 228.

⁹ Fatouros and Krischer, *Geschichte*, 1982, 1:9; Donald M. Nicol, *The Byzantine Family of Kantakouzenos (Cantacuzenus) ca. 1100–1460* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1968), 100.

¹⁰ Nicol, *The Reluctant Emperor*, 2–3, 138–39; Fatouros and Krischer, *Geschichte*, 1982, 1:1–2.

¹¹ Nicol, *The Reluctant Emperor*, 7–8 and 17; Fatouros and Krischer, *Geschichte*, 1982, 1:2.

Helena. Kantakouzenos served in the imperial administration, and in 1321 Andronikos II appointed him governor of Thessaly.¹²

Katakouzenos grew up with and befriended Andronikos III, the Emperor's grandson, and in adulthood supported him in his rebellion against Andronikos II, which began in 1321. In the succeeding years, despite several power-sharing agreements – including a co-emperorship for Andronikos III – open hostilities continued to break out intermittently between the emperor and his grandson. During the civil war, Kantakouzenos served Andronikos III as military leader, *mesazon*, and advisor. In times of relative peace between the two co-emperors, Kantakouzenos led campaigns against the Bulgarians, Mongols, and Turks, in his capacity as *mezas domestikos* (commander-in-chief of the empire's armed forces).¹³

In May 1328, Kantakouzenos was present as Andronikos III captured Constantinople and became the new emperor. Although Kantakouzenos rejected an offer to act as co-emperor, he remained a powerful figure and kept the post of *mezas domestikos*. He embarked on military campaigns against the Turks and Bulgarians, among others, and played an important role, diplomatically and on the battlefield, in the empire's incorporation of Epiros in 1337–1340.¹⁴

Not long after Andronikos III died in 1341, his widow, Anna of Savoy, and the Patriarch John Kalekas claimed the regency for Andronikos III's son, John V. At the urging of Kantakouzenos's erstwhile protégé, Alexios Apokaukos, they declared Kantakouzenos a rebel and put members of his family under house arrest, including his wife, held at Didymoteichon, and his mother, who died in prison in Constantinople in 1342. Kantakouzenos had himself declared co-emperor to John V by the troops who remained loyal to him and waged a six-year civil war against Anna and Kalekas. Despite numerous setbacks, Kantakouzenos was able to gain a foothold in Greece with help from the Turkish Emir of Aydin, Umur, Serbian king Stefan Uroš IV Dušan, and other allies within the empire. After the death of Alexios Apokaukos, who had commanded the forces arrayed against Kantakouzenos, the latter made several attempts to take Constantinople, and finally succeeded in February, 1347. Kantakouzenos was acclaimed

¹² Fatouros and Krischer, *Geschichte*, 1982, 1:1–2; Nicol, *The Reluctant Emperor*, 17–18. For further details on Kantakouzenos and his immediate family, see Nicol, *The Byzantine Family of Kantakouzenos*, 27–138. A family tree is provided on page 108.

¹³ Fatouros and Krischer, *Geschichte*, 1982, 1:2–4; Nicol, *The Reluctant Emperor*, 17–27. Fatouros and Krischer suggest, based on Kantakouzenos's own writings, that he was promoted to *mezas domestikos* in 1320, although his contemporary, Nicephoros Gregoras, stated that he occupied a different office during this time. Nicol believes that he achieved this post in 1325, during a lull in the civil war.

¹⁴ Fatouros and Krischer, *Geschichte*, 1982, 1:2–4; Nicol, *The Reluctant Emperor*, 27–46.

co-emperor in Constantinople with the young John V, who was married to Kantakouzenos's daughter, Helene.¹⁵

During the first years of his reign, Kantakouzenos unsuccessfully waged war against Genoa from 1348–1349, and against Stefan Uroš IV Dušan, who had conquered much of Greece during the civil war. A disastrous financial situation that increased taxation could not resolve, an epidemic in the capital in 1348, and the Hesychast religious controversy also made life difficult for the new emperor. In 1351, Kantakouzenos and the Patriarch Kallistos called a synod, with the result that the doctrinal views of Gregory Palamas were upheld. Kantakouzenos endeavored to restore Byzantine maritime might, and levied unpopular taxes for this purpose. During the Venetian–Genoan war, Kantakouzenos supported Venice, but circumstances compelled him to make peace with Genoa in 1352 after a major naval battle. He also unsuccessfully attempted to mend the schism with the Catholic Church, and cultivated diplomatic ties with the Ottoman Turks.¹⁶

In 1352, civil war broke out between John V Palaiologos, supported by the Bulgarians and Serbs, and John Kantakouzenos, who was aided by Turkish troops, Catalan mercenaries, and the forces of his son, Matthew, whom he proclaimed co-emperor in 1353. After John V Palaiologos reached the capital in 1354, the two agreed to a power-sharing arrangement. Shortly thereafter, however, Kantakouzenos left the palace and became a monk. Under the new name Joasaph, he resided in monasteries in Constantinople, while his wife joined a convent. He remained active in politics, advised John V Palaiologos, participated in union negotiations with the Vatican, and composed *The History of the Romans*. From 1379–1381, Kantakouzenos and his daughters were held hostage by his grandson, Andronikos IV. Subsequently, he relocated to the Peloponnese and died in Mistra on June 15, 1383.¹⁷ In addition to his history, Kantakouzenos wrote polemical works against Islam and Judaism, refutations of other writers, and theological works.¹⁸

There has been some discussion of whether Kantakouzenos wrote a paraphrase of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* – the current consensus is that he did not¹⁹ – and whether he personally undertook the copying of various

¹⁵ Fatouros and Krischer, *Geschichte*, 1982, 1:4–6; Nicol, *The Reluctant Emperor*, 46–85.

¹⁶ Fatouros and Krischer, *Geschichte*, 1982, 1:7–8; Nicol, *The Reluctant Emperor*, 84–119.

¹⁷ Fatouros and Krischer, *Geschichte*, 1982, 1:8–10; Nicol, *The Reluctant Emperor*, 119–60.

¹⁸ Fatouros and Krischer, *Geschichte*, 1982, 1:12–14; Nicol, *The Reluctant Emperor*, 145.

¹⁹ Nicol, *The Reluctant Emperor*, 148; Donald M. Nicol, "A Paraphrase of the *Nicomachean Ethics* Attributed to the Emperor John VI Cantacuzene," *Byzantinoslavica* 29 (1968): 1–16.

ancient manuscripts.²⁰ Whether Kantakouzenos spent time at Mount Athos after his abdication has also been a matter of debate.²¹

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

Kantakouzenos's history is known from six manuscripts. One, *Laurentianus IX 9*, is dated to 1369. Three others (*Seragliensis Graecus 28*, *Bononiensis 2212*, and *Parisinus-Coislinianus 144*), also date to the fourteenth century. The remaining two manuscripts – *Mutinesis 224–225* and *Monacensis 106* – are from the sixteenth century.²²

Edition

Ludwig Schopen, ed. *Ioannis Cantacuzeni eximperatoris Historiarum Libri IV*, 3 vols. Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 2–4. Bonn: Weber, 1828.

Publication History

In 1603, Jakob Pontanus published an edition and Latin translation with notes by Jakob Gretser based on *Monacensis 106*. Pierre Séguier re-edited the text based on Pontanus's edition and *Parisinus-Coislinianus 144*, and published it in 1645 in the Paris Corpus, with Pontanus's Latin translation and Gretser's notes.²³ A 1729 Venice edition reproduced the Paris edition. The *History* was published in the Bonn Corpus by Ludwig Schopen in 1828–1832.²⁴ Schopen relied on the Paris edition and *Monacensis 106*. The Venice edition was reprinted in 1866 as volumes 153 and 154 of Migne's *Patrologia Graeca*.²⁵

²⁰ Linos Politis, "Jean-Joasaph Cantuczuzène fut-il copiste?" *Revue des études Byzantines* 14 (1956): 195–99.

²¹ Fatouros and Krischer, *Geschichte*, 1982, 1:9.

²² *Ibid.*, 1:11.

²³ Jacob Pontanus, Jakob Gretser, and Pierre Séguier, eds., *Ioannis Cantacuzeni eximperatoris historiarum libri IV*. (Paris: Ex Typographia Regia, 1645).

²⁴ Ludwig Schopen, ed., *Ioannis Cantacuzeni eximperatoris Historiarum Libri IV*, 3 vols., Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 2–4 (Bonn: Weber, 1828).

²⁵ Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, vol. 153–54 (Paris: Apud J.-P. Migne, 1866); Fatouros and Krischer, *Geschichte*, 1982, 1:11–12.

Translations

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Fatouros, Georgios and Tilman Krischer, trans. *Johannes Kantakouzenos: Geschichte*, 3 vols. Bibliothek der griechischen Literatur 17, 21, 71. Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1982, 1986, and 2001.

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Michael Panaretos

The full title of Michael Panaretos's work is *About the Emperors of Trabezond, the Grand Komnenoi, How and When and How Long Each Ruled*. It is a brief history of the empire of Trebizond from 1204–1390. The text is twenty pages long in the modern edition. It is far more detailed for 1340–1390, when Michael was an eyewitness. It is written in Pontic dialect of the fifteenth century.

Michael Panaretos is known only from self-references in his history. Michael served emperor Alexios III Komnenos (1349–1390), the emperor of Trebizond. By 1363 he had the titles of *protosebastos* and *protonotarios*, but most likely had other offices before then, and he served Alexios in military as well as notarial capacities starting in the 1350s. He seems to have died after Alexios III.¹

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations*Manuscripts*

There is one manuscript *Marcianus Graecus 608*, of the fifteenth century.²

Edition

Lampsidēs, Odysseus. *Michaēl tou Panaretou Peri tōn megalōn Komnēnōn; eisagōgē, ekdosis, scholia*. Pontikai ereunai 2. Athens, 1958.

¹ Michaēl Panaretos, *Michaēl tou Panaretou Peri tōn megalōn Komnēnōn; eisagōgē, ekdosis, scholia*, trans. Odysseus Lampsidēs, Pontikai ereunai 2 (Athens, 1958), 20–21.

² Peter Schreiner, “Bemerkungen zur Handschrift der trapezuntinischen Chronik des Michael Panaretos in der Bibliotheca Marciana (Marc.gr.608/coll. 306),” in *Mare et Litorea: Essays Presented to Sergei Karpov for his 60th Birthday*, ed. Rustam Shukurov (Moscow: Indrik, 2009), 615f.

Publication History

The text was published by Tafel in 1832 and by the infamous Jakob Fallmerayer (see the Chronicle of Monemvasia) in 1843.³ Spyridōn Lampros published it again in 1907.⁴

Translation

Asp-Talwar, Annika. "The Chronicle of Michael Panaretos." In *Byzantium's Other Empire: Trebizond*, edited by Antony Eastmond, 173–212. Istanbul: Koç Üniversitesi, Anadolu Medeniyetleri Araştırma Merkezi, 2016.

An English translation by Scott Kennedy is forthcoming from the *Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library*.

Greek

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Lampsidēs, Odysseus. *O gamos David tou Megalou Komēnou kata to chronikon tou Panaretou*. Athens: Typographeion Myrtidou, 1953.

³ Gottlieb Lukas Friedrich Tafel, *Eustathii metropolitae Thessalonicensis opuscula. Accedunt Trapezuntinae historiae Panaretus et Euagenicus. E codicibus mss. Basilensi, Parisinis, Veneto* (Frankfurt: Sumptibus Sigismundi Schmerber, 1832); Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer, *Original-Fragmente, Chroniken, Inschriften und anderes Materiale zur Geschichte des Kaiserthums Trapezunt*, Abhandlungen der historischen Classe der Königlich Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 4.1 (Munich, 1843).

⁴ Spyridōn Lampros, "To Trapezountiakon chryonikon tou prōtosevastou kai prōtonotariou Michaēl Panaretou," *Neos Hellenomnemon* 4 (1907): 257–95.

Chronicle of Ioannina

This is an anonymous text describing the history of Epirus in the fourteenth century. It focuses on the rule of Thomas Preljubović (1366/1367–1384), his widow Maria Angelina, and her second husband Esau Buondelmonti in Ioannina. The text is relatively brief, covering roughly thirty years in nearly thirty pages in the Bonn edition. In one manuscript the story ends in 1399.¹ An Oxford manuscript continues to 1417/1418.² The text depicts Thomas Preljubović as an evil tyrant and Maria Angelina as a pious and virtuous wife.³

An 1845 edition by Andre Moustoxidis identified the monks *Kommenos* and *Proclus* as the authors of the history. These names only appear in the title of one of the manuscripts, and upon closer inspection it is clear that they in fact indicate the surnames of Thomas Preljubović.⁴ The text is published in the Bonn Corpus as the second item in a miscellany of notices on the history of Epirus. A vernacular summary survives in a late nineteenth-century manuscript.⁵

Publication History and Manuscripts

We lack a critical edition and thorough description of the manuscripts for this text. Leandros Vranousēs published a preliminary volume which surveyed the previous publications of the text, and announced a second volume which would contain descriptions of the manuscripts and a critical

¹ This is the version published in the Bonn edition.

² Lars Hoffmann, “Chronicle of Ioannina,” in *The Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, ed. R. Graeme Dunphy (Leiden: Brill, 2010), www.referenceworks.brillonline.com.

³ Donald Nicol, *The Despotate of Epirus* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1957), 143–45.

⁴ Leandros Vranoussis, “Deux historien byzantins qui n’ont jamais existé: Comménos et Proclos,” *Epetēris tou Mesaionikou Archeiou* 12 (1962): 27.

⁵ Leandros Vranousēs, “To Chronikon tōn Ioanninōn kat’ anekdoton dēmōdē epitomēn,” *Epetēris tou Mesaionikou Archeiou* 12 (1965): 62–64. Vranoussis includes a description of this manuscript with his parallel edition of both texts.

edition. This was never published. He did publish a version of the medieval text, with the parallel text of the vernacular version, but the edition of the medieval text was not based on examination of the surviving manuscripts.⁶ The history was first published in 1821 as part of a collection of historical texts dealing with the history of Epirus, found by the French consul in Ioannina, François Charles Hugues Laurent Pouqueville.⁷ Pouqueville's collection was reprinted in the Bonn Corpus in 1849.⁸ In the Bonn edition, the chronicle of Ioannina is text number two of the collection. Another edition of the text, based on a different manuscript, was published in Nauplion in 1831.⁹ In 1845, Moustoxidis published an edition based on the Nauplion publication and that of Pouqueville, but without consulting the manuscripts in person.¹⁰ In 1896, Uspenskii published an edition, based on yet another manuscript found in Meteora.¹¹ The Moustoxidis edition, however, formed the basis of later editions by Gabriel Destounis in 1858, Šafarik and Avramović in 1862, and that of Sebastião Cirac Estopañán in 1943.¹²

It is difficult to determine the current locations of these manuscripts. Vranousēs believed that Pouqueville's manuscript is now in Paris.¹³ The location of the manuscript used for the Nauplion edition was unknown to him.¹⁴ The manuscript of the Uspenskii edition is *St. Petersburg, Rossiyskaya natsional'naya biblioteka graecus 251* from the seventeenth century.¹⁵ Lars Hoffmann lists one of the major manuscripts as *Oxford, Aedis Christi graecus 49*.¹⁶

⁶ Vranousēs, "To Chronikon tōn Iōanninōn kat' anekdoton dēmōdē epitomēn."

⁷ François Charles Hugues Laurent Pouqueville, *Voyage dans la Grèce: comprenant la description ancienne et moderne de l'Épire, de l'Illyrie grecque, ...* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1820).

⁸ Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Historia politica et patriarchica Constantinopoleos; Epirotica*, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 49 (Bonn: Weber, 1849); Leandros I. Vranousēs, *Chronika tēs mesaionikēs kai tourkokratoumenēs peirou: ekdoseis kai cheirographa* (Ioannina: Ètaireias Epeirōtikōn Meletōn, 1962), 16–30.

⁹ Vranousēs, *Chronika tēs mesaionikēs*, 36–42.

¹⁰ Andreas Moustoxydēs, *Hellēnomniēmōn hē symmiktā hellēnika: syngramma periodikon*, 12 vols. (Athens, 1843). The Ioannina text was published in sections of volumes 1, 4, 8, 9, and 10. For details see Vranousēs, *Chronika tēs mesaionikēs*, 47.

¹¹ Porfirii Uspenskii, *Puteshestvie v Meteorskie i Osoolimpijskie monastyri Fessalii archimandrite Porfiria Uspenskago v 1859* (St. Petersburg: Izdanie Imperatorskoi Akademii Nauk, 1896); Vranousēs, *Chronika tēs mesaionikēs*, 103–16.

¹² Vranoussis, "Deux historien byzantins qui n'ont jamais existé: Comnénos et Proclos," 24–26.

¹³ Vranousēs, *Chronika tēs mesaionikēs*, 30.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 42. Cirac Estopañán believes this manuscript no longer exists. Sebastián Cirac Estopañán, *Bizancio y España: el legado de la basilisa María y de los despotas Thomas y Esau de Ioannina*, vol. 2 (Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Delegación de Barcelona, Sección de Bizantinística, 1943), 61–68.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 114.

¹⁶ Hoffmann, "Chronicle of Ioannina."

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- "To Chronikon tōn Iōanninōn kat' anekdoton dēmōdē epitomēn." *Epetēris tou Mesaiōnikou Archeiou* 12 (1965): 57–115.
- [Vranoussis] "Deux historien byzantins qui n'ont jamais existé: Comnénos et Proclos." *Epetēris tou Mesaiōnikou Archeiou* 12 (1962): 23–29.

Chronicle of Tocco

This text is a verse chronicle detailing events in Epirus from 1375 to 1422. It is an important witness to the politics and culture of the region. The beginning and ending are lost, and the name “Chronicle of Tocco” has been given to the text because it focuses on the reign of Charles I Tocco, who is presented as a great hero. Charles I Tocco was a member of an Italian family settled in northern Greece since the middle of the fourteenth century. He ruled as Despot of Epiros from 1411 to 1429. The chronicle presents events in western Greece, particularly Ioannina and the islands of Zakynthos, Kefhalonia, and Ithaka.¹ The chronicle is written in fifteen-syllable “political” verse, of which 3,923 verses survive. The verse is in vernacular Greek and provides some insight into the fifteenth-century language.² It sometimes uses Italian words and phrases.³

Nothing is known of the author. He would seem to be contemporary with the events described. The text displays a local worldview in which events in Constantinople are distant. Kazhdan has suggested that the chronicle may have originally been written in Italian, given that the author views the Tocco family so favorably.⁴ Yet it is also possible that the Charles Tocco had succeeded in winning the favor of some Greeks.

¹ Giuseppe Schirò, ed., *Cronaca dei Tocco di Cefalonia*, trans. Giuseppe Schirò, *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 10* (Rome: Accademia nazionale dei Lincei, 1975); Thekla Sansaridou-Hendrickx, *To Chronikon tōn Tokkōn: Ellēnes, Italoi, Alvanoī kai Tourkoi sto Despotato tēs Ēpeirou, 140s-150s ai.: ē kosmotheōria tou Agnōstou Syngrapheia* (Thessaloniki: Stamoulē, 2008).

² Schirò, *Cronaca dei Tocco di Cefalonia*, 173–96; Sansaridou-Hendrickx, *To Chronikon tōn Tokkōn*, 402.

³ Schirò, *Cronaca dei Tocco di Cefalonia*, 189–91.

⁴ Alexander Kazhdan, “Some Notes on the Chronicle of Tocco,” in *Bisanzio e l’Italia. Raccolta di studi in memoria di A. Pertusi* (Milan: Vita e pensiero, 1982), 170.

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

The main manuscript, *Vaticanus Graecus 1881*, is from the middle of the fifteenth century. This has corrections in the same hand as the main text, which led Schirò to argue it was the author's autograph.⁵ Given the poor shape of the text, Kazhdan finds this doubtful.⁶ *Vaticanus Graecus 2241* is the work of Nicholas Sofianos in the 16th century, and is a copy of *Vaticanus Graecus 1881*.⁷

Edition

Schirò, Giuseppe, ed. *Cronaca dei Tocco di Cefalonia*. Translated by Giuseppe Schirò. *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* 10. Rome: Accademia nazionale dei Lincei, 1975. This is the first edition of this text.

Translation

Italian

Schirò, Giuseppe, ed. *Cronaca dei Tocco di Cefalonia*. Translated by Giuseppe Schirò. *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* 10. Rome: Accademia nazionale dei Lincei, 1975.

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Ilieva, Annetta. "Images of Towns in Frankish Morea: The Evidence of the 'Chronicles' of the Morea and of the Tocco." *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 19, no. 1 (1995): 94–119.

Kazhdan, Alexander. "Some Notes on the Chronicle of Tocco." In *Bisanzio e l'Italia. Raccolta di studi in memoria di Agostino Pertusi*, 169–76. Milan: Vita e pensiero, 1982.

⁵ Schirò, *Cronaca dei Tocco di Cefalonia*, 145–49.

⁶ Kazhdan, "Some Notes on the Chronicle of Tocco."

⁷ Schirò, *Cronaca dei Tocco di Cefalonia*, 156–57.

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- "The Lament of Carlo Tocco for His Brother's Death (1418 AD)." *Acta Patristica et Byzantina* 18 (2007): 128–44.
- "Three 'Popular' Late-Byzantine Chronicles: An Assessment of Their Value and Veracity." *Journal of Early Christian History* 2, no. 2 (2012): 97–116.
- "The Study of the Weltanschauung of Anonymous Late Byzantine Chroniclers in the Framework of Metahistory." *Acta Patristica et Byzantina* 16 (2005): 255–73.
- To Chronikon tōn Tokkōn: Ellēnes, Italoι, Alvanoι kai Tourkoι sto Despotato tēs Ēpeirou, 140s-150s ai.: ē kosmotheōria tou Agnōstou Syngrapheα*. Thessaloniki: Stamoulē, 2008.
- Schirò, Giuseppe, ed. *Cronaca dei Tocco di Cefalonia*. Translated by Giuseppe Schirò. *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* 10. Rome: Accademia nazionale dei Lincei, 1975.
- "Struttura e contenuto della cronaca dei Tocco." *Byzantion* 32 (1962): 203–50.
- Zachariadou, Elisabeth. "Oi chilioi stichoi stēn archē tou Chronikou tōn Tokkōn." *Epeirotica chronica* 25 (1983): 158–81.

John Kananos

This text combines an account of the Ottoman siege of Constantinople led by Murad II in 1422 with praise of the Virgin Mary to whom the author attributes the city's salvation.¹

Kananos's account begins by describing how the Ottoman army devastated the area around the city. It then discusses how, under the command of Sultan Murad II and one of his generals, Michael Bey, the Ottomans began preparations for an assault on the walls and employed a variety of siege weapons. They were accompanied, he writes, by Mersaita, a Muslim holy man who predicted the city's fall. Kananos writes that, greatly outnumbered and lacking effective leadership, the defenders initially despaired. He vividly describes a direct attack on the walls, how a large segment of the city's population – including women and monks – participated in the battle, and the defenders' success against overwhelming odds. Kananos attributed the victory to divine assistance in the form of the Mother of God, whose appearance on the city walls caused the Turkish army to flee. Other historians offered more mundane explanations: according to Doukas, Murad abandoned his efforts after receiving news of an uprising by a rival in Asia Minor, while Chalkokondyles cites Murad's frustration with the assault's lack of progress.²

The text combines historical narrative in the Byzantine tradition with a tribute to the Virgin Mary in hagiographical style.³ The author claims that the text is written in an accessible style of Greek and intended

¹ Andrea Massimo Cuomo, ed., *Ioannis Canani de Constantinopolitana Obsidione Relatio*, trans. Andrea Massimo Cuomo (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), xxix–xxxii; Margaret Purdie, “An Account by John Cananus of the Siege of Constantinople in 1422” (MA thesis, University of Western Australia, 2009), xi–xlix.

² Cuomo, *Ioannis Canani*, lxx.

³ *Ibid.*, liv–lix. Quotation on lix.

to reach a broad audience.⁴ The sources are largely unclear. The text includes allusions to classical authors and other accounts of sieges. An oration of Gregory of Nazianzus serves as a model for one section of the text.⁵

John Kananos is only known from this text. The writing style indicates that the author was fairly well-educated, familiar with Byzantine historiography, and skilled in rhetoric.⁶ A Laskaris Kananos traveled extensively in northern Europe in the fifteenth century. We have no basis to say whether he was the author, or related to him.⁷

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

Three manuscripts are extant. The oldest is in *Vaticanus Graecus 579* (folios 355r–364v), which dates to the fifteenth century. Cuomo believes it was made in Constantinople. The second manuscript, *Neapolitanus III B 26* (folios 1r–10r), was likely made in Rome by Alexandros Laskaris around the turn of the seventeenth century. The third, *Vallicellianus ms. Allacci XCI*, was transcribed by Leo Allatius, also in Rome around the same time. *Neapolitanus* is believed to be a direct transcription of *Vaticanus Graecus 579*. The *Vallicellianus* manuscript is, in turn, a copy of the *Neapolitanus*.⁸

Edition

Cuomo, Andrea Massimo, ed. *Ioannis Canani de Constantinopolitana Obsidione Relatio*. Translated by Andrea Massimo Cuomo. *Byzantinisches Archiv* 30. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016.

⁴ *Ibid.*, xl; Herbert Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner: Philosophie, Rhetorik, Epistolographie, Geschichtsschreibung, Geographie*, vol. 1, *Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft*, 12.5 (Munich: Beck, 1978), 1: 483.

⁵ Cuomo, *Ionnis Canani*, lix–lxii.

⁶ *Ibid.*, liv.

⁷ Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur*, 1978, 1:484. On Laskaris Kananos, see Jonathan Harris, “When Did Laskaris Kananos Travel in the Baltic Lands?,” *Byzantion* 80 (2010): 173–87.

⁸ On the entire manuscript tradition, see Andrea Massimo Cuomo, “Notizie sulla tradizione manoscritta della Diegesis di Ioannes Cananus,” *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 63 (2013): 53–60; Cuomo, *Ionnis Canani*, xxxiii–xxxviii. On *Vaticanus Graecus 579*, see Robert Devreesse, *Codices vaticani graeci T. II, Codices 330–603*, vol. 2 (Rome: Biblioteca Vaticana, 1937).

Publication History

The text was first published by Leo Allatius in 1651 as part of the Paris Corpus.⁹ His edition was reprinted in Venice in 1729.¹⁰ Allatius's edition was published with some revisions by Immanuel Bekker in the Bonn Corpus in 1838, and reprinted in the *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 156.¹¹ An edition and Italian translation by Pinto were published twice.¹²

*Translations**English*

Cuomo, Andrea Massimo, ed. *Ioannis Canani de Constantinopolitana Obsidione Relatio*. Translated by Andrea Massimo Cuomo. *Byzantinisches Archiv* 30. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016.

Starting Point

Cuomo, Andrea Massimo, ed. *Ioannis Canani de Constantinopolitana Obsidione Relatio*. Translated by Andrea Massimo Cuomo. *Byzantinisches Archiv* 30. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016.

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Kindt, Bastien, and Anastasia Yannacopoulou. *Thesaurus Ducae Historiae Turcobyzantinae: accedunt concordantiae narrationis de obsidione*

⁹ Leone Allacci, trans., *Georgiu Tu Akropolitu Tu Megalu Logothetu Chronikē Syggraphē = Georgii Acropoliuae Magni Logothetae Historia, Ioelis Chronographia Compendiaria, & Ioannis Canani Narratio de Bello CP*. Leone Allatio Interprete, Cvm eiusdem Notis, & Theodori Dovzæ Observationibus. *Accesit Diatriba de Georgiivm Scriptis*. (Paris: Ex Typographia Regia, 1651), 187–99.

¹⁰ Theodor Dousa, ed., *Georgiu tu Akropolitu Tu Megalu Logothetu Chronikē syngraphē = Georgii Acropoliuae Magni Logothetae Historia. Joelis Chronographia Compendiaria & Joannis Cananis Narratio de Bello CP*, trans. Leone Allacci (Venice: Javarina, 1729).

¹¹ Immanuel Bekker, *Georgius Phrantzes, Ioannes Cananus, Ioannes Anagnostes*, *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae* 36 (Bonn: Weber, 1838), 455–79. Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, vol. 156 (Paris: Apud J.-P. Migne, 1866).

¹² Emilio Pinto, ed., *L'assedio di Costantinopoli*, trans. Emilio Pinto (Messina: Edas, 1977); Emilio Pinto, ed., *De Constantinopolis odsidione.*, trans. Emilio Pinto, *Collana di studi greci* 47 (Naples: Libreria scientifica, 1968).

Constantinopolitana a Ioanne Canano necnon Homiliarum a Dorotheo Mitylinensi et anonymo auctore. Corpus Christianorum. Thesaurus patrum Graecorum. Turnhout: Brepols, 2012.

- Pinto, Emilio, "Tecniche belliche e metafore nel *De Constantinopolis Obsidione*." In *Atti del seminario internazionale di studi letteratura scientifica e tecnica Greca e Latina*, edited by Paolo Radici Colace and Antonino Zumbo, 259–64. Messina: EDAS, 2000.
- Purdie, Margaret. "An Account by John Cananus of the Siege of Constantinople in 1422." MA thesis, University of Western Australia, 2009.
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John Anagnostes

This narrative provides an eyewitness account of the Ottoman capture of Thessaloniki in 1430 and the aftermath of the fall of the city. It is relatively brief, around thirty-eight printed pages. The text is framed as a response to a request for an account of the fall of the city. It is attributed to John Anagnostes, about whom nothing else is known. From his surname, *Anagnostes* (reader) it can be assumed that he was a member of the clergy.¹

The account was written sometime after the conflict itself in 1430.² Melville-Jones suggests that Anagnostes must have composed the narrative after 1440 due to a reference to a building built by Murad II. The building can be dated to the 1440s based on inscriptions carved on the building.³

Giannēs Tsaras argued that Anagnostes's narrative was written by multiple authors because he saw the text as having at least two levels of writing, one more simplistic, and one more emotive and rhetorically elaborate.⁴ This assertion has not been generally accepted.⁵ Paolo Odorico suggests that an initial account of the sack of the city was later elaborated with detailed descriptions of the aftermath of the city's fall.⁶ John Melville-Jones argues that Anagnostes wrote the entirety of his account of the fall of Thessaloniki himself, but chose to use different styles in order to reflect variations in emotion and gravity.⁷ At one point in the narrative, Anagnostes refers to others who have written about Thessaloniki, which could refer to his

¹ Paolo Odorico, *Thessalonique: Chroniques d'une ville prise*, (Toulouse: Anacharsis, 2005), 34.

² John R. Melville-Jones, *Venice and Thessalonica 1423–1430: The Greek Accounts*, Archivio del litorale Adriatico 8 (Padova: Unipress, 2006), 145; Odorico, *Thessalonique*, 257.

³ Melville-Jones, *Venice and Thessalonica*, 146.

⁴ Giannēs Tsaras, ed., *Anagnōstēs: Diēgēsis peri tēs teleutaiais alōseōs tēs Thessalonikēs; monōdia epi tē alōsei tēs Thessalonikēs*. Vivliothēkē tēs Vyzantinēs Thessalonikēs 1 (Thessaloniki, 1958).

⁵ Melville-Jones, *Venice and Thessalonica*, 145.

⁶ Odorico, *Thessalonique*, 36–37.

⁷ Melville-Jones, *Venice and Thessalonica*, 145.

knowledge of John Kaminiates's narrative of the 904 capture of the city by Leo of Tripoli, or to the lamentation by Demetrios Kydones.⁸

Anagnostes begins his narrative with a description of the beauty of the city of Thessaloniki before quickly noting how much the city has suffered under the rule of the Venetians, to whom the city had surrendered in an effort to avoid being conquered by the Ottomans.⁹ Archbishop Symeon died in September of 1429, and soon after a series of three messengers came to the city to warn them of imminent attack by the Turkish forces.¹⁰ Anagnostes noted that the ramparts did not have enough defenders – due to poor decision-making on the part of the Venetians – such that the Ottomans were able to infiltrate the walls and damage them in a number of places quite quickly, thus ensuring that they would be able to access the city.¹¹ Anagnostes notes that even noble women of Thessaloniki fought alongside their fellow citizens and the Venetians, but the defenders were unable to repel the Ottoman advance.¹² Anagnostes, along with other combatants, hoped to retreat to a tower within the town that had been fortified, but entrance to the tower was barred to all but high-ranking Venetians, who then used constructions connecting it to the coast to rejoin their ships.¹³

Anagnostes describes the aftermath of the capture of the city in detail. Those left alive were dragged from the city to an encampment held by the Ottomans, while many others were left dead in the streets and on the ramparts.¹⁴ Anagnostes describes scenes of families ripped apart, homes pillaged, religious houses plundered (including that of Saint Demetrius), and the destruction of holy relics, like those of Theodora.¹⁵ Yet, Anagnostes relates, Murad seemed to change his mind, ordered the release and personally paid the ransom of the highest ranking of the nobles, and allowed them to resettle Thessaloniki.¹⁶ The people returned, the city was rebuilt, and Thessaloniki, Anagnostes says, began to experience a rebirth.¹⁷ In the second or third year after the fall of the city, however, Murad returned to Thessaloniki and reversed his decision.¹⁸ Properties and houses were seized

⁸ Ibid., 147; Odorico, *Thessalonique*, 259.

⁹ Odorico, *Thessalonique*, 259.

¹⁰ Ibid., 260–64.

¹¹ Ibid., 263–64, 269.

¹² Ibid., 271.

¹³ Ibid., 276.

¹⁴ Ibid., 277.

¹⁵ Ibid., 277–81.

¹⁶ Ibid., 282–83.

¹⁷ Ibid., 285–87.

¹⁸ Ibid., 287.

in order to allow for settlement by Turks living in the surrounding area, and many of the churches and monasteries were destroyed.¹⁹

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

Anagnostes's text is included in *Codex Vaticanus Graecus 172*, which was produced in Thessaloniki and contained other texts relevant to the history of the city, including John Kaminiates's account of the tenth-century sack of Thessaloniki. It is also in *Barbarinus Graecus 241*, of the sixteenth century.²⁰

Edition

Tsaras, Giannēs, ed. *Ioānnēs Anagnōstēs, Diēgēsis peri tēs teleutaias alōseōs tēs Thessalonikēs; monōdia epi tē alōsei tēs Thessalonikēs*. Vivliothēkē tēs Vyzantinēs Thessalonikēs 1. Thessaloniki, 1958.

Publication History

An edition with a Latin translation was published by Leo Allatius in 1653.²¹ Allatius's Latin translation was reprinted in Immanuel Bekker's edition for the Bonn Corpus. The *Patrologia Graeca* used Allatius's edition and translation.²²

Translations

English

Melville-Jones, John R., ed. *Venice and Thessalonica 1423–1430: The Greek Accounts*. Archivio del Litorale Adriatico 8. Padova: Unipress, 2006.

French

Odorico, Paolo, *Thessalonique: Chroniques d'une ville prise*. Toulouse: Anacharsis, 2005.

¹⁹ Ibid., 288–91.

²⁰ Maria Elisabetta Colonna, *Gli storici bizantini dal IV al XV secolo*. (Naples: Armanni, 1956), 63.

²¹ Leone Allacci, ed., *Leonis Allatii Symmikta, sive Opusculorum, Graecorum et Latinorum, vetustiorum ac recentiorum, libri duo...* (Colonia Agrippina: Apud Jodocum Kalcovium, 1653).

²² Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Georgius Phrantzes, Ioannes Cananus, Ioannes Anagnostes*, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae 36 (Bonn: Weber, 1838); Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, vol. 156 (Paris: Apud J.-P. Migne, 1866).

Greek

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FURTHER READING

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- Melville-Jones, John R., ed. *Venice and Thessalonica 1423–1430: The Greek Accounts*. Archivio del Litorale Adriatico 8. Padova: Unipress, 2006.
- Odorico, Paolo, *Thessalonique: Chroniques d’une ville prise*. Toulouse: Anacharsis, 2005.
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Leontios Machairas

This text is a prose history of Cyprus written in Cypriot demotic Greek. It begins with stories of St. Helena in Cyprus in the fourth century, then jumps to the eleventh century and runs quickly through the history of Cyprus to the beginning of the reign of Peter I Lusignan (1359–1369), at which point it tells the history of the Lusignan kings up to 1432. The text is hostile to the Genoese and warmly supportive of the Lusignan kings. It uses many loan words deriving from Latin, French, and Italian and is an interesting example of fifteenth-century demotic Greek.¹

The first book begins with stories of St. Helena and the True Cross and races through the history of Cyprus until 1359 in thirty-nine pages. Books two and three, which are by far the longest and most detailed, cover the reigns of Peter I (1359–1369) in 188 pages, and Peter II (1369–1382) in 322 pages. The final three books cover the reigns of James I (1382–1398), Janus (1432–1458), and John II (1432–1458) in ninety pages with increasing speed and decreasing detail.

Galatariotou argues that Machairas participated in the Greek tradition of history writing, innovating only in writing in vernacular rather than Attic Greek.² In this she opposes the appraisal of Dawkins, who saw Machairas as culturally divorced from traditions of Byzantine historical writing, and as more of a storyteller than an historian.³ Anaxagorou sees

¹ Richard McGillivray Dawkins, *The Vocabulary of the Mediaeval Cypriot Chronicle of Leontios Makhairas* (Hertford: Stephen Austin & sons, 1931); Nadia Anaxagorou, *Narrative and Stylistic Structures in the Chronicle of Leontios Machairas* (Nicosia: A. G. Leventis Foundation, 1998), 17–18; Michael Dendias, “Peri tōn en tē Kypriakē rēmatōn ek tēs Italikēs kai Gallikēs,” *Athēna* 36 (1925): 142–65; Simos Menardos, “Gallikai Mesaionikai Lexeis en Kyprō,” *Glōssikai Meletai* 3 (1969): 151–70.

² Catia Galatariotou, “Leontios Machairas’ Exegesis of the Sweet Land of Cyprus: Towards a Re-Appraisal of the Text and Its Critics,” in *The Sweet Land of Cyprus*, ed. Anthony Bryer and G. S. Georghallides (Nicosia: The Cyprus Research Centre, 1993), 393–413.

³ Richard McGillivray Dawkins, *The Nature of the Cypriot Chronicle of Leontios Makhairas*, The Taylorian Lecture (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1945).

Machairas as differing from the Byzantine tradition of historiography by writing for oral presentation using a “relaxed and informal style.”⁴ She sees the text as having been influenced by the French culture and as having an “astonishingly close narrative and stylistic affinity” to the chronicles of Villehardouin, Robert de Clari, and Froissart.⁵

Machairas was born near the middle of the fourteenth century into a wealthy, educated family that was influential in the court of the Lusignan kings of Cyprus.⁶ In 1401 Machairas was working as a secretary to the nobleman John de Nores. By 1426, he had joined the service of King Janus (1398–1432).⁷ Leontios Machairas was mentioned as an ambassador of King John II of Cyprus (1432–1458) to Asia Minor in 1432.⁸

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

There are three manuscripts of the text: *Marcianus Graecus Class VII, 16*, of the sixteenth century; *Oxonienensis, Selden, supra 14*, completed in Paphos in 1555; and *Ravenna Biblioteca Classense 187*, of the early seventeenth century. Dawkins was unaware of the Ravenna manuscript in making his edition.

Edition

Dawkins, Richard McGillivray, ed. *Recital Concerning the Sweet Land of Cyprus, Entitled “Chronicle.”* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932.

⁴ Anaxagorou, *Narrative and Stylistic Structures*, 116–17.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 130–31.

⁶ Michalis Pieris argues that Machairas was born ca. 1355–1365, and is seconded by Galatariotou. Philippou proposes 1350–1360. Dawkins had earlier argued for ca. 1380. Michalis Pieris, “Gyrō apo tē chronologēsē tou Leontiou Machaira,” *Ariadnē* 5 (1989/1990): 229–54; Loizos Philippou, “Leontios o Machairas,” in *Dialexeis tou Syllogou ‘Kinyras’ peri tōn koryphaiōn Philosophōn kai Pezographōn* (Paphos, 1937), 66–83; Galatariotou, “Leontios Machairas’ Exegesis of the Sweet Land of Cyprus,” 394; Dawkins, *The Nature of the Cypriot Chronicle of Leontios Makhairas*, 3; Dawkins, ed., *Recital Concerning the Sweet Land of Cyprus, Entitled ‘Chronicle’* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932), 2:16.

⁷ Anaxagorou, *Narrative and Stylistic Structures*, 13–14.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 12; His presence was mentioned by the Burgundian traveler Bertrandon de la Broquière. Charles Henri Auguste Schefer, trans., *Voyage d’outremer de Bertrandon de la Broquière* (Paris: E. Leroux, 1892), 106.

Publication History

The first edition was published by Constantine Sathas in the second volume of his *Mesaiōnikē Bibliothēkē*.⁹ Another edition was published with a French translation in 1882.¹⁰ Both of these editions were based on *Marcianus Graecus Class VII, 16*.

*Translations**English*

Dawkins, Richard McGillivray, ed. *Recital Concerning the Sweet Land of Cyprus, Entitled 'Chronicle.'* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932.

French

Kōnstantinos N. Sathas, ed. *Leontiou Machaira: Chronikon Kyprou, Chronique de Chypre.* Translated by Emmanuel Miller. Publications de l'école des langues orientales vivantes, Second Series 2. Paris: Leroux, 1882.

Greek

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Italian

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⁹ Kōnstantinos N. Sathas, ed., "Leontiou Machaira, Chronikon Kyprou," in *Mesaiōnikē Vivliothēkē*, vol. 2 (Venice: Typois tou Chronou, 1873), 51–409.

¹⁰ *Leontiou Machaira: Chronikon Kyprou, Chronique de Chypre*, ed. Kōnstantinos N. Sathas, trans. Emmanuel Miller, Publications de l'école des langues orientales vivantes, Second Series 2 (Paris: Leroux, 1882).

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Sylvester Syropoulos

Sylvester Syropoulos was a patriarchal official and member of the Byzantine delegation to the Council of Florence in 1438–1439 which enacted Union between the Catholic and Orthodox churches. Syropoulos wrote *Memoires* of his experiences at the council between 1443 and 1445.¹ Laurent argues that a later version was written around 1461.²

Syropoulos was born in Constantinople around 1400 into a well-off family and received an excellent education. He had a career as a patriarchal official and had the titles of *Megas ekklesiarches* and *dikaiophylax*. He died sometime after 1453. At the Council of Florence he signed the Decree of Union between the churches under intense pressure. Once he returned home, he repudiated the Union and supported the anti-Unionist cause.³

The *Memoirs* serve a clear purpose in exonerating Syropoulos for his support of the Union after he had repudiated that position. The narrative explains why the delegates were made to accept the Union, even though it contradicted their principles, and implicitly makes a case for the rejection of the Council's Decree of Union.⁴ The *Memoirs* do not engage in theological or philosophical debates on the issues at hand in ecclesiastical Union.⁵

¹ Vitalien Laurent, ed., *Les mémoires du grand ecclésiarque de l'Église de Constantinople Sylvestre Syropoulos sur le Concile de Florence (1438–1439)*, Concilium Florentinum documenta et scriptores 9 (Rome: Pontificum institutum orientalium studiorum, 1971), 14; Joseph Gill, *The Council of Florence* (Cambridge: University Press, 1959), xi.

² Laurent, *Les mémoires du grand ecclésiarque*, 42–47. van Dieten agrees that there were two versions, but argues that the primary manuscript used in Laurent's edition (*Parisinus Graecus 427*) represents the later rather than earlier version. Jan Louis van Dieten, "Zu den zwei Fassungen der Memoiren des Silvester Syropoulos über das Konzil von Ferrara-Florenz. Die Umkehrung der These Laurents und die Folgen," *Annuarium Historiae Conciliorum* 11 (1979): 367–95.

³ Laurent, *Les mémoires du grand ecclésiarque*, 38–42.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 25–26; Joseph Gill, *Personalities of the Council of Florence: And Other Essays*. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1964), 147–48; Gill, *The Council of Florence*, xii–xiii; Mary B. Cunningham, "Sylvester Syropoulos: The Author and His Outlook," in *Sylvester Syropoulos on Politics and Culture in the Fifteenth-Century Mediterranean*, ed. Fotini Kondyli, Vera Andriopoulou, Eirini Panou, and Mary B. Cunningham (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 14.

⁵ Laurent, *Les mémoires du grand ecclésiarque*, 7.

Rather they focus on personalities and politics. Syropoulos's eschewal of theology may be a strategy for distancing himself from the decisions of the council.⁶ Gill argues that the *Memoirs* are not historically reliable in comparison with the Acts of the Council, a position rejected by Geanakoplos.⁷ The level of detail in the narrative suggests that Syropoulos may have used a diary or other records of his experiences in writing his memoirs.⁸

The text does not conform to the stylistic conventions of Greek historical writing. The opening of the text is lost, so it is impossible to know if it had an introduction that placed it in the tradition of classicizing historiography. The memoirs are written in a colloquial and vernacular style. It is organized into twelve sections (the first is lost), each entitled an *apomnemoneumatōn*, a memoir. This term was used to title the sections of Xenophon's dialogues in defense of Socrates and of Diogenes Laertius's *Lives of Philosophers*. Syropoulos's choice to use this term for his writing may have been intended to align it more with biographical and apologetic texts than with historical writing. His narrative is a highly partisan personal memoir consistently told from his point of view.

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

The text is known through eighteen manuscripts of the fifteenth to nineteenth centuries, many of which are partial. *Paris Graecus 427* of the mid-fifteenth century forms the primary basis of Laurent's edition.⁹ Robert Creighton's 1660 editon was based on *Leidensis Vossianus Graecus F54*.¹⁰

Publication History

The memoirs were first published by Robert Creighton in 1660 with a Latin translation.¹¹ A Latin translation was prepared by Jacques Goar in

⁶ Cunningham, "Sylvester Syropoulos."

⁷ Joseph Gill, "The 'Acta' and the Memoirs of Syropoulos as History," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 14 (1948): 303–55; Deno John Geanakoplos, "A New Reading of the Acta, Especially Syropoulos," in *Christian Unity. The Council of Ferrara-Florence*, ed. Giuseppe Alberigo (Leuven: Peeters, 1991), 325–51.

⁸ Cunningham, "Sylvester Syropoulos," 12–13.

⁹ Laurent, *Les mémoires du grand ecclésiarque*, 61–94.

¹⁰ van Dieten, "Zu den zwei Fassungen der Memoiren des Silvester Syropoulos," 368.

¹¹ *Vera historia unionis non veræ inter Græcos et Latinos: sive Concilii florentini exactissima narratio, græcè scripta per Sylvestrum Sguropulum magnum ecclesiarcham, atque unum è quinque crucigeris & intimis*

1654, but not published.¹² Syropoulos was the subject of a text seminar in the Centre for Byzantine, Ottoman, and Modern Greek Studies, Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity, at the University of Birmingham beginning in 2007. Some of the results of the seminar's research are available at: www.syropoulos.co.uk/index.htm.

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Laurent, Vitalien, ed. *Les mémoires du grand évêque de l'Église de Constantinople Sylvestre Syropoulos sur le Concile de Florence (1438–1439)*. Concilium Florentinum documenta et scriptores 9. Rome: Pontificium institutum orientalium studiorum, 1971.

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French

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consiliariis patriarche constantinopolitani, qui concilio interfuit., ed. and trans. Robert Creighton (The Hague: Ex Typographia Adriani Vlacq, 1660).

¹² Goar's translation is in *Paris Graecus 3080* and *Paris Graecus 317*. Laurent, *Les mémoires du grand évêque de l'Église de Constantinople*, 51–59.

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Doukas

This fifteenth-century history, entitled “The total of years from the first man until our generation” begins with Adam, but covers the world’s first 6,712 years up to the Latin capture of Constantinople (1204) in a few brief paragraphs that list the lengths of time between major figures. A further five paragraphs bring the narrative to the fourteenth century where the author switches to a fine-grained level of detail. The history covers in earnest the period 1341–1462. The text breaks off suddenly in the midst of describing the Ottoman siege of Mytilene. Originally, Doukas’s history contained no internal divisions, however, the text’s first editor, Boullialdus, divided it into chapters.

Doukas’s descriptions of various characters in his history are morally judgmental, so that history becomes a series of clashes between the virtuous and the wicked. John Kantakouzenos is noble and good, while Mehmed II is bloodthirsty and depraved. Fortune plays a recurring role as an irresistible force that explains why success and failure do not track neatly with virtue and vice. Simultaneously, the sins of the Romans ultimately account for their misfortunes. Doukas provides lurid descriptions of Turkish atrocities during the capture of Thessaloniki and Constantinople. His history does, however, admit virtuous Turks, such as Murad II, and corrupt Romans, such as Alexios Apokaukos.

The text argues ardently for the need for union between the Catholic and Orthodox churches and portrays Mehmed II’s conquest of Constantinople as divine punishment for the failure of the Romans to support the Union of Florence. It is Doukas who attributed to the anti-unionist Grand Duke Loukas Notaras the famous line that “it would be better to see the turban of the Turks reigning in the center of the city than the Latin miter.”¹

¹ Vasile, Grecu, ed., *Istoria turco-bizantină (1341–1462)*, trans. Vasile Grecu (Bucharest: Ed. Acad. R.P.R., 1958), chapter 37, paragraph 10. Harry J. Magoulias, trans., *Doukas: Decline and Fall of Byzantium to the Ottoman Turks* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1975), 210.

Our knowledge of the historian Doukas derives from his history. The author's grandfather, Michael Doukas, was a supporter of John VI Kantakouzenos in the civil war of 1341–1347. Michael was forced to flee Constantinople in 1345 and went to Ephesus where he was protected by the Turkish emir of Aydin.² Doukas the historian mentions that he was employed as a secretary by the Genoese magistrate of Nea Phokaia, Giovanni Adorno, in 1421.³ Later he worked for the Genoese Gattilusi family, owners of the island of Lesbos. The author helped the Gattilusi in their negotiations with the Ottoman sultan prior to the Ottoman conquest of Lesbos in 1462.⁴

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

The primary manuscript is *Parisinus Graecus 1310*. Made in the fifteenth century, this may be Doukas's autograph.⁵ A second manuscript of the sixteenth century, *Parisinus Graecus 1766*, is a copy of *Parisinus Graecus 1310*.

Edition

Greco, Vasile, ed. *Istoria turco-bizantină (1341–1462)*. Translated by Vasile Greco. Bucharest: Ed. Acad. R.P.R., 1958.

Publication History

The text was first edited by Ismael Bullialdus on the basis of *Parisinus Graecus 1310* and published in the Paris Corpus in 1649.⁶ Bullialdus's edition was republished in Venice in 1729, and forms the basis of the Bonn edition published in 1834.⁷ Vasile Greco's edition is the first to make use of both manuscripts.

² Greco, *Istoria turco-bizantină (1341–1462)*, chapter 5, paragraph 5. Magoulias, *Doukas*, 66.

³ Greco, *Istoria turco-bizantină (1341–1462)*, chapter 25, paragraphs 5–8; Magoulias, *Doukas*, 148–51.

⁴ Greco, *Istoria turco-bizantină (1341–1462)*, chapter 44; Magoulias, *Doukas*, 250–54.

⁵ Sofia Kotzabassi, "Ist der Kopist des Geschichtswerkes von Dukas Dukas selbst?," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 96 (2003): 679–83.

⁶ Ismael Bullialdus, *Ducae Michaelis Ducae Nepotis Historia Byzantina Res in Imperio Graecorum Gesta Complectens...* (Paris: Ex Typographia Regia, 1649).

⁷ Immanuel Bekker and Ismael Boulliaud, eds., *Ducae, Michaelis Ducae Nepotis, Historia Byzantina, Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae* 21 (Bonn: Weber, 1834).

*Translations**English*

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George Sphrantzes



This text is a historical memoir in which George Sphrantzes recounts his life of service to the last three Palaiologos emperors, including events from 1413 to 1477.¹ Sphrantzes wrote in vernacular Greek, making his history an unusual example of non-classicizing fifteenth-century Greek.² He occasionally makes use of Turkish and Italian words.³ The text does not try to conform to the stylistic conventions of a classicizing Greek history.

Sphrantzes's history is known as the *Chronicon Minus*. A much longer elaboration of his text is known as the *Chronicon Maius*. The *Maius* contains nearly all of *Minus* but expands it into a much larger text. It is now known that the *Maius* was composed in the sixteenth century, by Makarios Melissenos, the Metropolitan of Monemvasia. His motives for writing the *Maius* remain unclear.⁴ The *Maius* contains a more extensive account of the Palaiologos dynasty, various additions to the narrative in the *Minus*, a long description of the siege and conquest of Constantinople, and

¹ Martin Hinterberger, *Autobiographische Traditionen in Byzanz*, Wiener byzantinistische Studien 22 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1999), 331–43.

² Marios Philippides, trans., *The Fall of the Byzantine Empire: A Chronicle by George Sphrantzes 1401–1477* (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1980), 12–13; William Miller, “The Historians Doukas and Phrantzes,” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 46, no. 1 (1926): 70–71.

³ Herbert Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner: Philosophie, Rhetorik, Epistolographie, Geschichtsschreibung, Geographie*, vol. 1, Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft, 12.5 (Munich: Beck, 1978), 1:498.

⁴ See Jean B. Faller Papadopoulos, “Phrantzès est-il réellement l’auteur de la grand Chronique qui porte son nom?,” *Izvestija na bulgarskiiia archeologicheski institut* 8 (1935): 177–89; Jean B. Faller Papadopoulos, “Über ‘Maius’ und ‘Minus’ des Georgios Phrantzes und über die Randnoten des angeblichen Pachomios,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 38 (1938): 323–31; Jean B. Faller Papadopoulos, “Ioannes VIII Palaiologos kai to chronikon tou Phrantzes,” *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 32 (1932): 257–62; Vitalien Laurent, “Sphrantzès et non Phrantzès: à nouveau!,” *Revue des études Byzantines* 9, no. 1 (1951): 170–71; Franz Dölger, *Ein literarischer und diplomatischer Fälscher des 16. Jahrhunderts, Metropolit Makarios von Monembasia* (Leipzig: Verlag der Offizin Richard Hadl, 1936); Raymond-Joseph Loenertz, “Autor de Chronicon Maius attribué à Georges Phrantzes,” *Miscellanea Giovanni Mercati* 123 (1946): 273–311; Marios Philippides and Walter K. Hanak, *The Siege and the Fall of Constantinople in 1453: Historiography, Topography, and Military Studies* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 49–65; Philippides, *The Fall of the Byzantine Empire*, 6–10.

further details about the fall of Morea.⁵ Margaret Carroll has attempted to rehabilitate sections of the *Maius* dealing with the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople as originating with Sphrantzes – and hence as an eyewitness.⁶ These efforts are rejected by Philippides.⁷

Sphrantzes's chronicle, the *Minus*, begins with a brief prologue in which the author introduces himself, cites his birth year, and discusses the political situation of the Ottomans and the empire during his childhood. He then quickly moves to the events he personally remembered beginning in 1413. Sphrantzes carries his story down to 1477. The text includes events in Sphrantzes's family life as well as major political events. Since Sphrantzes was a diplomat involved in many of the political events of his era, his personal memoir functions as a detailed political history. The history includes accounts of his many diplomatic missions, his administrative duties in Morea, his friendship with the Emperor Constantine IX, a digression regarding a conversation between Emperor John VIII and a Jew, and the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople, although the latter receives only brief treatment in the *Minus*.⁸ Sphrantzes continued to chart his travails and travels after the sack of the city. He explains at the end of his text that he wrote at the request of "certain prominent individuals" in Corfu who wanted to know about all the events that he had witnessed.⁹ Most scholars suppose that he wrote the entire text while in retirement in Corfu.¹⁰

Our information about George Sphrantzes derives exclusively from the history he wrote, but he discloses far more than is usual about his own experiences and his family in his history. His name is sometimes given as "Phrantzes," although "Sphrantzes" is more commonly used in modern scholarship.¹¹ He had a significant career in which he served emperors

⁵ For a brief summary, see Philippides, *The Fall of the Byzantine Empire*, 7.

⁶ Margaret Carroll, "Notes on the Authorship of the 'Siege' Section of the Chronicon Maius of Pseudo-Phrantzes, Book III," *Byzantion* 43 (1973): 30–38; Margaret Carroll, "Notes on the Authorship of the 'Siege' Section of the Chronicon Maius of Pseudo-Phrantzes, Book III," *Byzantion* 42 (1972): 5–22; Margaret Carroll, "Notes on the Authorship of the 'Siege' section of the Chronicon Maius of Pseudo-Phrantzes, Book III," *Byzantion* 41 (1971): 28–44.

⁷ See Marios Philippides, "The Fall of Constantinople: Bishop Leonard and the Greek Accounts," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 22, no. 3 (1981): 289–90.

⁸ Philippides and Hanak, *The Siege and the Fall*, 47–49; Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur*, 1:495–96.

⁹ Riccardo Maisano, ed., *Giorgio Sfranze: Cronaca*, trans. Riccardo Maisano, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 29 (Rome: Accademia nazionale dei Lincei, 1990), chapter 48; Philippides, *The Fall of the Byzantine Empire*, 95.

¹⁰ See Miller, "The Historians Doukas and Phrantzes," 70.

¹¹ On the author's name, see I. Tsaras, "Sphrantzēs, Phialitēs ē Phrantzēs," *Vyzantina: epistēmōnikon organon Kentrou Vyzantinōn Ereunōn Philosophikēs Scholēs Aristoteleiou Panepistēmiou* 9 (1977) 123–39; Laurent, "Sphrantzēs et non Phrantzēs: à nouveau!"; Vitalien Laurent, "Sphrantzes et non Sphrantzes," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 44 (1951): 373–78.

Manuel II (1391–1425), John VIII (1425–1449), and Constantine IX (1449–1453) in personal, diplomatic, and administrative capacities.

Sphrantzes was born in 1401 in Constantinople and had one sister and several brothers. His father was the tutor of Thomas Palaiologos, the son of Manuel II (1391–1425) and his uncle was the tutor of Constantine IX. Sphrantzes became one of Manuel II's personal servants in 1418.¹² He conducted a diplomatic mission to Sultan Murad II in 1423.¹³

Sphrantzes described himself as a lifelong close friend of Constantine XI.¹⁴ When John VIII appointed his brother Constantine (the future Constantine XI) as despot of Morea, Sphrantzes accompanied him.¹⁵ In 1428, he was given charge of Glarentza castle in Morea by Constantine. He aided Constantine in his campaign to retake all of Morea for the empire, but was captured in 1429 while trying to capture the city of Patras. Released after forty days, he was appointed prefect of Patras after it surrendered to Constantine.¹⁶ He spent the 1430s conducting numerous diplomatic missions. In 1432, John VIII named him *protovestiarios*.¹⁷ In 1438, he married Helene, whose father was an imperial official, and together they had four sons and one daughter, although three of the sons did not survive past childhood.¹⁸ In the 1440s, he carried out further diplomatic activity for Constantine, including to John VIII and the Turkish Sultan. In 1443, Constantine appointed him governor of Selymbria. Three years later, he was made prefect of Mistra.¹⁹

In 1449, he accompanied the now-emperor Constantine to Constantinople, where he found himself trapped in the siege. He describes how at the emperor's behest he drew up a secret list of the city's available manpower and weaponry and was also tasked with inspecting defenses. At the siege's end, Sphrantzes and his family were captured by the victorious Turks. His son was executed. His wife and daughter were bought by the Sultan; the latter died in captivity. After being ransomed, Sphrantzes fled to Mistra and managed to ransom his wife.²⁰ For a time, he served Despot Thomas in Morea. To escape the Turkish advance, he fled in 1460 to Corfu.

¹² Maisano, *Giorgio Sfranze: Cronaca*, chapter 6; Philippides, *The Fall of the Byzantine Empire*, 24.

¹³ Maisano, *Giorgio Sfranze: Cronaca*, chapter 12; Philippides, *The Fall of the Byzantine Empire*, 28.

¹⁴ Maisano, *Giorgio Sfranze: Cronaca*, chapter 15; Philippides, *The Fall of the Byzantine Empire*, 31.

¹⁵ Maisano, *Giorgio Sfranze: Cronaca*, chapter 15; Philippides, *The Fall of the Byzantine Empire*, 31–32.

¹⁶ Maisano, *Giorgio Sfranze: Cronaca*, chapter 15; Philippides, *The Fall of the Byzantine Empire*, 40–43.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, chapter 21; Philippides, *The Fall of the Byzantine Empire*, 46.

¹⁸ Maisano, *Giorgio Sfranze: Cronaca*, 4*.

¹⁹ Maisano, *Giorgio Sfranze: Cronaca*, 5*, chapter 27. Miller, "The Historians Doukas and Phrantzes," 65–68.

²⁰ Maisano, *Giorgio Sfranze: Cronaca*, chapters 35–37; Philippides, *The Fall of the Byzantine Empire*, 69–76.

During his retirement he made several journeys, including to Rome.²¹ He took the monk's name Gregorios (his wife became a nun) and spent the 1470s finishing his history.²² Scholars estimate Sphrantzes's date of death to between 1477 and 1479.²³

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

There are three main manuscripts: *Napoli, Biblioteca Nazionale 16 A10, Vaticana, Fondo Ottoboniano Greco 260*, and *Torino, Biblioteca Nazionale Graecus 246*. *Napoli 16 A10* was made in the 1580s by Giovanni Santamaura. *Vaticana, Fondo Ottoboniano Greco 260* is a miscellany of texts from the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries bound together. It contains the text of Sphrantzes copied by Manuele Glinzunio, datable to the 1570s or 1580s. *Torino, Biblioteca Nazionale Graecus 246* is from the late seventeenth century. The *Napoli, Biblioteca Nazionale 16 A10* manuscript was copied by Leo Allatius into *Vallicelliano Allacci 72*, which in turn was copied into *Barberiniani Greci 175* and *176*.²⁴

Publication History (of the Minus)

Angelo Mai made an edition based on *Vaticana Fondo Ottoboniano Greco 260* published in 1837.²⁵ This edition was reprinted in *Patrologia Graeca* 156.²⁶ The Bonn edition of the *Maius* did not include the text of the *Minus*.²⁷ Vasile Grecu published an edition with Romanian translation in 1966.²⁸

²¹ Maisano, *Giorgio Sfranze: Cronaca*, chapters 43–48; Philippides, *The Fall of the Byzantine Empire*, 87–95.

²² Maisano, *Giorgio Sfranze: Cronaca*, 5–7*. Miller, "The Historians Doukas and Phrantzes," 63–70.

²³ See Philippides, *The Fall of the Byzantine Empire*, 18. On Sphrantzes's biography, see also Margaret G. Carroll, *A Contemporary Greek Source for the Siege of Constantinople, 1453: The Sphrantzes Chronicle* (Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1985), 15–19. A timeline of his life is provided in Philippides, *The Fall of the Byzantine Empire*, 17–18.

²⁴ Maisano, *Giorgio Sfranze: Cronaca*, 52–55*.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 76*. Angelo Mai, ed., *Classici Auctores E Vaticanis Codicibus Editi ... Georgii Phrantzae Chronicon Parvum Rerum Sui Temporis*. (Rome, 1837).

²⁶ Jacques-Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, vol. 156 (Paris: Apud J-P. Migne, 1866).

²⁷ Immanuel Bekker, *Georgius Phrantzes, Ioannes Cananus, Ioannes Anagnostes*, *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae* 35 (Bonn: Weber, 1838).

²⁸ Vasile Grecu, ed., *Georgios Sphrantzes: Memorii 1401–1477; în anexă, Pseudo-Phrantzes, Macarie Mellisenos, Cronica: 1258–1481*, translated by Vasile Grecu, *Scriptores Byzantini* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1966).

Edition

Maisano, Riccardo, ed. *Giorgio Sfranze: Cronaca*. Translated by Riccardo Maisano. *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* 29. Rome: Accademia nazionale dei Lincei, 1990.

*Translations**English*

Philippides, Marios, trans. *The Fall of the Byzantine Empire. A Chronicle by George Sphrantzes 1401–1477*. Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1980.

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Vourna, Tasou, trans. *Geōrgiou Sphrantzē Chronikon*. Athens: Ekdoseis Patakē, 2001.

Starting Point

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- "A Minor Matter of Imperial Importance in the Sphrantzes Chronicle." *Byzantion* 49 (1979): 88–93.
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- "Phrantzès est-il réellement l'auteur de la grand Chronique qui porte son nom?" *Izvestija na bulgarskija archeologicheski institut* 8 (1935): 177–89.
- "Über 'Maius' und 'Minus' des Georgios Phrantzes und über die Randnoten des angeblichen Pachomios." *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 38 (1938): 323–31.

Michael Kritovoulos

This is a detailed classizing history covering the years 1451–1467 in five books.¹ The subject of Michael Kritovoulos's work was the final destruction of the Byzantine Empire and the transfer of power to the Ottoman Empire. He paid particular attention to the life and deeds of Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror, to whom he dedicated his history. It opens with a preface in which, along with traditional claims about truthfulness and the importance of preserving the memory of great deeds, he apologizes to his Greek readers for not making Greek suffering the primary subject of his account. He likens himself to ancient historian Flavius Josephus, who sometimes praised the Romans and was not uncritical of his Jewish countrymen.²

The first book is one of the most detailed surviving accounts of the fall of Constantinople. The following four books concern Mehmed's military campaigns, his conquest of the remaining portions of the Byzantine Empire, and his efforts to rebuild Constantinople, which had been largely depopulated, into a worthy capital for his empire. Kritovoulos, for instance, described how the Sultan forcibly resettled thousands of Christians, Jews, and Muslims to the city, launched ambitious building projects, appointed a Greek Patriarch in 1454, and attempted to revive the city's economic life.³ Throughout the *History*, Kritovoulos intersperses autobiographical details regarding his own role in the transition to Ottoman rule.⁴

¹ Diether Reinsch, trans. *Mehmet II. erobert Konstantinopel: die ersten Regierungsjahre des Sultans Mehmet Fatih, des Eroberers von Konstantinopel 1453: das Geschichtswerk des Kritobulos von Imbros*, Byzantinische Geschichtsschreiber 17 (Graz: Styria, 1986), 10.

² Charles Riggs, trans. *Kritovoulos History of Mehmed the Conqueror* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954), 9–12; Hunter Koski, "Assessing the Historian Michael Kritovoulos as a Historical Figure through Analysis of Michael Kritovoulos' *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*," *International Journal of Arts & Sciences* 6, no. 2 (2013): 2–3.

³ On the contents of the *History*, see Reinsch, trans. *Michael Kritovoulos*, 10–14.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 9–10.

Kritovoulos rarely names his sources, but his work appears to have been based on spoken conversations in Turkish and Greek, as well as his own personal experience. Some scholars have criticized him as little more than a propagandist for the Sultan, whom he frequently praised.⁵ Diether Reinsch has argued that Kritovoulos did have sympathies for the Ottomans but was still a Byzantine patriot, a view that has been seconded by Hunter Koski.⁶ In general, Kritovoulos's accounts accord well with other sources from the time and remain among the most comprehensive for a period from which few historical narratives survive.

Kritovoulos of Imbros was the classicizing pen name of Michael Kritopoulos, a Byzantine scholar from the Aegean island of Imbros. Probably born between 1400 and 1410, Kritovoulos lived in Imbros and Constantinople during his childhood. He earned a reputation as a learned man, according to the diary of Ciriaco de'Pizzicolli, who visited him in Imbros in 1444. He also kept up contacts with several well-known scholars. He explains in his *History* that he served as a politician and diplomat as the Turks solidified their control over the region, helping to negotiate the transition of Imbros, as well as neighboring islands Lemnos and Thasos, to Turkish rule. From 1456 until at least 1460, he served as governor of Imbros under the Sultan. The events of his later life remain largely unknown. He probably departed Imbros before it was occupied by Venice in 1466. Subsequently, he likely resided in Constantinople, where he lived through the plague of 1467. His date of death is not known. The last sign of Kritovoulos is a letter written to him by the scholar Georgios Amirutzes in 1468.⁷ Besides his *History*, a prayer to Christ and a poem written by Kritovoulos survive; two other short works – a homily and a letter – were destroyed in a fire in 1671.⁸

Kritovoulos wrote the bulk of his account between the fall of Constantinople, in 1453, and 1467, when he gave the completed text to the Sultan along with a dedicatory letter.⁹

⁵ Franz Babinger, *Mehmed the Conqueror and His Time*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978).

⁶ Reinsch, trans. *Michael Kritovoulos*, 14–16; Diether Reinsch, "Kritovoulos of Imbros. Learned Historian, Ottoman *Raya* and Byzantine Patriot," *Zbornik Radova Vizantinoloskog Instituta* 40 (2003): 297–311; Koski, "Assessing the Historian Michael Kritovoulos," 2.

⁷ Reinsch, trans. *Michael Kritovoulos*, 9–10; Diether Reinsch, ed., *Critobuli Imbriotae historiae*, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 22 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1983), 72–87; Koski, "Assessing the Historian Michael Kritovoulos," 3; Reinsch, "Kritovoulos of Imbros," 299–301.

⁸ Reinsch, "Kritovoulos of Imbros," 298–99.

⁹ Reinsch, trans. *Michael Kritovoulos*, 14; Reinsch, *Critobuli Imbriotae historiae*, 28–29; Reinsch, "Kritovoulos of Imbros," 298.

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

The *History* survives in a single autograph manuscript, *Codex G.Ī.3.*, housed in the Topkapı Saray library in Istanbul. Based on its watermarks, it has been dated to between 1465 and 1467. It is believed to have been written by the author himself, since it features substantial revisions and matches Kritovoulos's handwriting, which has survived in a manuscript of Thucydides. A different manuscript of the text was found in the mid-nineteenth century by German philologist Constantin Tischendorf, who published the dedicatory letter.¹⁰ This manuscript, now referred to as "T," no longer survives.¹¹

Edition

Reinsch, Diether, ed. *Critobuli Imbriotae historiae*. Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 22. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1983.

Publication History

Kritovoulos's history was unknown until the mid-nineteenth century. Carl Müller published an edition in Paris in 1870.¹² A partial edition and French translation was published in Budapest in the 1875.¹³ Vasile Grecu published Romanian translation and revised version of Müller's edition in 1963.¹⁴

Translations

English

Riggs, Charles, trans. *History of Mehmed the Conqueror*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954.

¹⁰ Constantin von Tischendorf, *Notitia editionis codicis Bibliorum Sinaitici*. (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1860), 123–24.

¹¹ Reinsch, *Critobuli Imbriotae historiae*, 18–27; Reinsch, "Kritovoulos of Imbros," 297–98.

¹² Carl Müller, ed., *Critobuli Imbriotae libri quinque de rebus gestis Mechemetis*, *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum* 5 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1870).

¹³ Philipp Anton Dethier, ed., *Vios tou Mōameth 2/Vie de Mahomet II*, *Monumenta Hungariae historica* 2, *Scriptores* 21 (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akademia, 1875).

¹⁴ Vasile Grecu, ed., *Critobul din Imbros din domnia lui Mahomed al II-lea anii 1451–1467*, *Scriptores Byzantini* 4 (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Republicii Populare Romine, 1963).

German

Reinsch, Diether, trans. *Mehmet II. erobert Konstantinopel: die ersten Regierungsjahre des Sultans Mehmet Fatih, des Eroberers von Konstantinopel 1453: das Geschichtswerk des Kritobulos von Imbros*. Byzantinische Geschichtsschreiber 17. Graz: Styria, 1986.

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Çokona, Ari, trans. *Kritovulos tarihi 1451–1467*. Istanbul: Heyamola Yayınları, 2012.

Greek

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Laonikos Chalkokondyles

The *Demonstrations of Histories* narrates the rise of the Ottoman Empire in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, until roughly the mid-1460s, and the concurrent decline of the Byzantine Empire. Taking Herodotos as his structural model, Chalkokondyles presents detailed portraits of the (pre) histories and cultures of the various ethnic groups of the medieval world, particularly the Greeks and the Ottomans but also peoples in regions as geographically distant as England and India. Chalkokondyles's central narrative is the expansion of the Ottomans and the deeds of their rulers, of whom Mehmed II receives the most comprehensive treatment.¹

The *Demonstrations* is organized into ten Books, although the fact that Book 10 ends in mid-sentence, and occasional lacunae and grammatical errors throughout the work, have led historians to believe the history was left unfinished and unrevised. It contains three or four interpolations by another author, possibly Georgios Amiroutzes.²

The *Demonstrations* is not openly hostile to Islam or the Ottomans, unlike some previous histories, such as that by Doukas. Instead, Chalkokondyles takes the part of a neutral observer toward the Christian and Muslim worlds.³ Jonathan Harris has argued that rather than explaining the fall of

¹ Anthony Kaldellis, *A New Herodotos – Laonikos Chalkokondyles on the Ottoman Empire, the Fall of Byzantium, and the Emergence of the West*, Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library, supplement to 33–4 (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2014), ix–xi, 11, and 23–30; Aslihan Akisik, “Self and Other in the Renaissance: Laonikos Chalkokondyles and Late Byzantine Intellectuals” (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2013), 2. The starting date of the *Histories* is impossible to determine precisely, since it begins with accounts of the pre-history of the Greeks and the Turks, and includes no absolute dates. On the contents of the *Histories*, see also Athanasios Markopoulos, “Das Bild des Anderen bei Laonikos Chalkokondyles und das Vorbild Herodot,” *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 50 (2000): 205–16; Jonathan Harris, “Laonikos Chalkokondyles and the Rise of the Ottoman Turks,” *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 27 (2003): 153–70.

² Anthony Kaldellis, “The Interpolations in the Histories of Laonikos Chalkokondyles,” *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 52, no. 2 (2012): 259–83.

³ Kaldellis, *New Herodotos*, 11; Anthony Kaldellis, trans., *The Histories*, Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library 33–34 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 1: viii.

Constantinople as divine punishment for Byzantine sins or a product of the mysterious workings of fate like other historians of his day, Chalkokondyles suggested that Turkish virtue played an important role in the conquests he describes.⁴ The *Demonstrations* is also notable in that it casts the Byzantines as “Greeks” rather than Romans.⁵ Further, Chalkokondyles does not display any particular interest in Christianity or ecclesiastical affairs. Some scholars have attributed this choice of topics to his Neoplatonist training.⁶ Chalkokondyles’s rather obscure writing style imitates that of Thucydides.⁷

Scholars now believe that Chalkokondyles began researching and writing the *Demonstrations* sometime in the 1450s and stopped in the mid-1460s.⁸ Chalkokondyles seems to have relied primarily on Greek and Turkish sources, though he may also have used western sources as well. Most of his information was likely passed along orally, although he claims in one place that he had access to Ottoman budget records. Chalkokondyles almost never explicitly names his sources, however, so they remain largely obscure.⁹

Laonikos Chalkokondyles was the pen name of Nikolaos Chalkokondyles.¹⁰ Chalkokondyles avoids talking about himself in his history, only mentioning his father’s political actions when the narrative demands, and then with Thucydidean detachment.¹¹ Based on the territory Chalkokondyles describes in his history as being held by the Byzantine Empire at the time, scholars have estimated that he was born around the year 1430 into a distinguished Athenian family.¹² His father, Georgios,

⁴ Harris, “Laonikos Chalkokondyles and the Rise of the Ottoman Turks.”

⁵ See Kaldellis, *New Herodotos*, 171–206.

⁶ Kaldellis, *The Histories*, 1: xiv; Harris, “Laonikos Chalkokondyles and the Rise of the Ottoman Turks,” 159–60.

⁷ Kaldellis, *New Herodotos*, 30–38. See also Fritz Rödel, *Zur Sprache des Laonikos Chalkondyles und des Kritobulos aus Imbros* (Munich: Kutzner, 1905).

⁸ See Anthony Kaldellis, “The Date of Laonikos Chalkokondyles’ *Histories*,” *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 52, no. 1 (2012): 111–36; Kaldellis, *New Herodotos*, 8–12; Herbert Wurm and Ernst Gamillscheg, “Bemerkungen zu Laonikos Chalkokondyles,” *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 42 (1992): 213–19. Before this consensus emerged, many historians erroneously believed that the *Demonstrations* contained a passage referring to events in the 1480s, and had thus assumed that Chalkokondyles finished the work around this time. It has now been established that the latest events the author describes – the Venetian-Ottoman war – date to 1463.

⁹ See Anthony Kaldellis, “The Greek Sources of Laonikos Chalkokondyles,” *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 52, no. 4 (2012): 738–65; Kaldellis, *New Herodotos*, 85–100–147; Serif Bastav, “Die türkischen Quellen des Laonikos Chalkondylas,” in *Akten des XI. internationalen Byzantinistenkongresses, München, 1958*, ed. Franz Dölger and Hans-Georg Beck (Munich: Beck, 1960), 35–42.

¹⁰ Kaldellis, *New Herodotos*, 1; Akisik, “Self and Other,” 1.

¹¹ Kaldellis, *New Herodotos*, 30–34.

¹² *Ibid.*, 2–3; Akisik, “Self and Other,” 4–5.

attempted to secure the rulership of the city with the help of the widow of the previous ruler, Florentine Duke Antonio I, and by trying to win the favor of Ottoman Sultan Murad II (1421–1451). The plan was unsuccessful, however, and the family moved to Mistra when Chalkokondyles was still a child.¹³ In Mistra, his father undertook ambassadorial duties for Constantine Palaiologos, despot of Morea. Chalkokondyles's vivid descriptions in his *Demonstrations of Histories* of the battle at the Hexamillion wall, when Murad II's forces burst into the Peloponnese, have led to speculation that he was present at this event.¹⁴

Chalkokondyles studied under the Neoplatonist philosopher Plethon. This is attested by the diary of Kyriacus of Ancona, an antiquarian and friend of Chalkokondyles's father who described meeting the "remarkably learned" youth in the company of Plethon at Constantine's court and being given a tour by him of ancient Sparta in 1447.¹⁵

The details of Chalkokondyles's biography after 1447 remain largely a mystery. Kaldellis suggests he may have researched and wrote the *Histories* in Constantinople after its capture by the Ottomans, due to his intimate knowledge of Ottoman affairs and the fact that the oldest surviving manuscript of his *Histories* is known to have been copied in Constantinople.¹⁶ Scholarly estimates for his date of death have ranged widely between the 1460s and 1490s.¹⁷

Manuscripts, Editions, and Translations

Manuscripts

The oldest manuscript is *Parisinus Graecus 1780*, which scholars believe is a copy produced by Demetrios Angelos in Constantinople in the mid-to-late 1400s – very shortly after the original was composed. Another manuscript, *Parisinus Graecus 1781*, has been dated to the late fifteenth century.¹⁸

¹³ Kaldellis, *New Herodotos*, 3–4; Akisik, "Self and Other," 7. Kaldellis believes that Chalkokondyles's mother died before these events took place.

¹⁴ Kaldellis, *New Herodotos*, 4–5.

¹⁵ Kyriacus's diary also provides Nikolaos as Chalkokondyles's given name. *Ibid.*, 5–7; Akisik, "Self and Other," 1–8.

¹⁶ Kaldellis, *New Herodotos*, 8–15.

¹⁷ See especially Wurm and Gamillscheg, "Bemerkungen Zu Laonikos Chalkokondyles"; Jenö Darkó, "Zum Leben des Laonikos Chalkondyles," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 24, no. 1 (1924): 35–36; Jenö Darkó, "Neue Beiträge zur Biographie des Laonikos Chalkokandyles," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 27, no. 1 (1927): 276–85.

¹⁸ Kaldellis, *New Herodotos*, 21–22.

Twenty-nine manuscript copies of the *Demonstrations* have come down to us from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, a testament to the work's popularity.¹⁹

Editions

Darkó, Eugenius, ed. *Laonikos Chalkokondyles, Laonici Chalcocondylæ Historiarum Demonstrationses*, Budapest: Sumptibus Academiae litterarum Hungaricae, 1922–1927.

Publication History

A Latin translation of the text by Conrad Clauserus was published in Basel in 1556.²⁰ It was published with a French translation by Blaise de Vigenère in Paris in 1577. The first Greek edition was published in Geneva in 1615.²¹ The text was published by Bekker, with Clauserus's Latin translation, in the Bonn Corpus in 1843.²² It was reprinted in 1866 by Migne in *Patrologia Graeca* vol. 159.²³

Translations

English

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¹⁹ Akisik, "Self and Other," 115. On the manuscript tradition see also Herbert Wurm, "Die handschriftliche Überlieferung der 'Apodeixeis istorion' des Laonikos Chalkokondyles," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 45 (1995): 223; Herbert Wurm, "Der Codex Monacensis gr. 307a. Ein Beitrag zur Überlieferungsgeschichte des Laonikos Chalkokondyles," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 44 (1994): 455–62.

²⁰ Conrad Clauserus, trans., *Laonici Chalcondylae Atheniensis de Origine et Rebus Gestis Turcorum Libri Decem, Nuper e Graeco in Latinum Conversi* (Basel: Ioannems Oporinum, 1556).

²¹ *Laonici Chalcocondylae Atheniensis Historia de Origine Ac Rebus Gestis Imperatorum Turcicorum* (Geneva: Apud Petrum de la Rouiere, 1615).

²² Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Laonici Chalcocondylae Atheniensis Historiarum libri decem*, translated by Konrad Clauser, *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae* 47 (Bonn: Weber, 1843).

²³ Jacques-Paul Migne, *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*, vol. 159 (Paris: Apud J.-P. Migne, 1866).

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APPENDIX A

Time Periods Covered in the Histories



The following chart does not include texts that are brief lists of dates or that only deal with single events

Creation – // – 250CE – 300 – // – 550 – 575 – 600 – 625 – 650 – 675	
	582–602 Theophylakt Simokatta
	-----Creation to 628 Paschal Chronicle
-----Creation to 284 George Synkellos	-----284–813-----Theophanes-----
	-----602–769-Nikephoros--
Creation to 842-----	-----George the Monk-----
Creation to 948 or 963-----	-----Symeon Logothete-----
Creation to 1057-----	-----Kedrenos-----
Creation to 1118-----	-----Zonaras-----
Creation to 1118-----	-----Manasses-----
Creation to 1118-----	-----Glykas-----
Creation to 1261-----	-----Synopsis Chronike-----
Aeneas to 1323-----	-----Constantine Akropolites-----
Jesus to 610-----	-----Xanthopoulos-----
37 to 1261-----	-----Ephraim-----

700 – 725 – 750 – 775 – 800 – 825 – 850 – 875 – 900 – 925 – 950

-----284–813---Theophanes-----

--602–769--Nikephoros--

Creation to 842--George the Monk-----

---813–886--Genesis-----

-----803–961 Theophanes Continuatus--

959–976

Leo the Deacon

-----811–1057----- Skylitzes-----

-----Creation to 948 or 963-----Symeon Logothete-----

-----Creation to 1057-----Kedrenos-----

-----Creation to 1118-----Zonaras-----

-----Creation to 1118-----Manasses-----

-----Creation to 1118-----Glykas-----

-----Creation to 1261-----Synopsis Chronike-----

-----Aeneas to 1323-----Constantine Akropolites-----

-----37 to 1261-----Ephraim-----

975 – 1000 – 1025 – 1050 – 1075 – 1100 – 1125 – 1150 – 1175 –

959–976

Leo the Deacon

-----976–1070s---Psellos-----

---1034–1079---

Attaleiates

Skylitzes-----811–1057-----

1057–1079

Scylitzes continuatus

1071–1079

Bryennios

--1081–1118--

Komnene

-----1118–1176--Kinnamos-----

-----1118–1206--Choniates-----

Creation to 1057--Kedrenos-----

Creation to 1118-----Zonaras-----

Creation to 1118-----Manasses-----

Creation to 1118-----Glykas-----

Creation to 1261-----Synopsis Chronike-----

Aeneas to 1323-----Constantine Akropolites-----

37 to 1261-----Ephraim-----

1200 – 1225 – 1250 – 1275 – 1300 – 1325 – 1350 – 1375 – 1400

1118–1206

Choniates

-----1203–1261-----

George Akropolites

-----1230–1307-----

Pachymeres

-----1204–1358-----Gregoras-----

---1320–1356---

Kantakouzenos

-----1204–1390-----Panaretos-----

-----1320–1417-----

Chronicle of Ioannina

---1341–1462---Doukas---

-----1375–1422

Chronicle of Tocco

1359–1432–Machairas

1413–1477

Sphranzes

Creation to 1261-----

Synopsis Chronike

37 to 1261---Ephraim-----

Aeneas to 1323-----Constantine Akropolites-----

1425 – 1450 – 1475 – 1500

1341–1462--Doukas--

1359–1432

Machairas

1413–1477--Sphrantzes-----

~14thc to 1460s-----

Chalkokondyles

APPENDIX B

Timeline of Authors' Lives



The dates presented here are approximate. Texts with uncertain attribution are not included. Please consult the entries on the individual authors for further details.

600CE – // – 800 – 825 – 850 – 875 – 900 – 925 – 950 – 975 – 1000			
Theophylakt	George Synkellos	Kaminiates	
	Theophanes		Genesisios
	Nikephoros		Leo the Deacon
	George the Monk		

1025 – 1050 – 1075 – 1100 – 1125 – 1150 – 1175 – 1200 – 1225 –			
Psellos	Kedrenos	Choniates	
Attaleiates	Zonaras	Manasses	
	Skylitzes	Bryennios	Kinnamos
Xiphilinos	Komnene	Glykas	
		Eustathios	

1250 – 1275 – 1300 – 1325 – 1350 – 1375 – 1400 – 1425 – 1450 – 1475			
Skoutariotes		Panaretos	Machairas
Akropolites		Gregoras	Syropoulos
Pachymeres			Sphrantzes
Xanthopoulos	Kantakouzenos		Doukas
			Kitrovoulos
			Chalkokondyles